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GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

NOVEMBER 2013

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What to see in and around Berlin

Trained fruit

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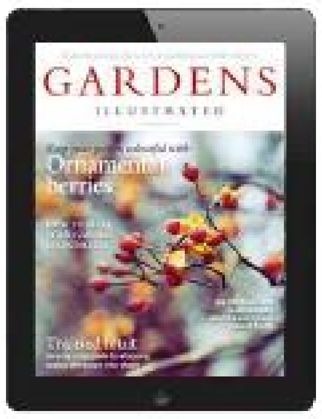
editor's letter

I once worked with a young woman who always wore something twinkly. Every day it would be different, but there was always a bit of glitter about her. When I mentioned it she admitted it was true and reasoned,"Well, we all benefit from a bit of sparkle." I reckon gardens do too and there's nothing like a few gold or silver highlights or the sparkle of jewel-like berries to lift the spirits, particularly in autumn. To help you choose the best ornamental berries for your garden, we ask nurseryman Martin Hughes-Jones to select his favourites. We also visit Lady Farm in Somerset, designed and created by owner Judy Pearce, where the rich diversity of clever plant combinations, including prairie and steppe plantings, look particularly magical at this time of year. I couldn't help chuckling at Judy's statement that "An obliging husband is the secret to every woman gardener's success." I couldn't agree more. Another important factor in ensuring the garden looks as good as possible for as long as possible is structure, and there's little more beautiful than a row of ancient ornamental fruit trees. To give an insight into how to create some wonderful, elegant shapes, we ask experts Chris and Sarah Pike of Branch Nurseries to show us the process in a step-by-step guide. I hope you enjoy the issue and may the autumnal sunshine give your garden an extra bit of twinkle.

Juliet



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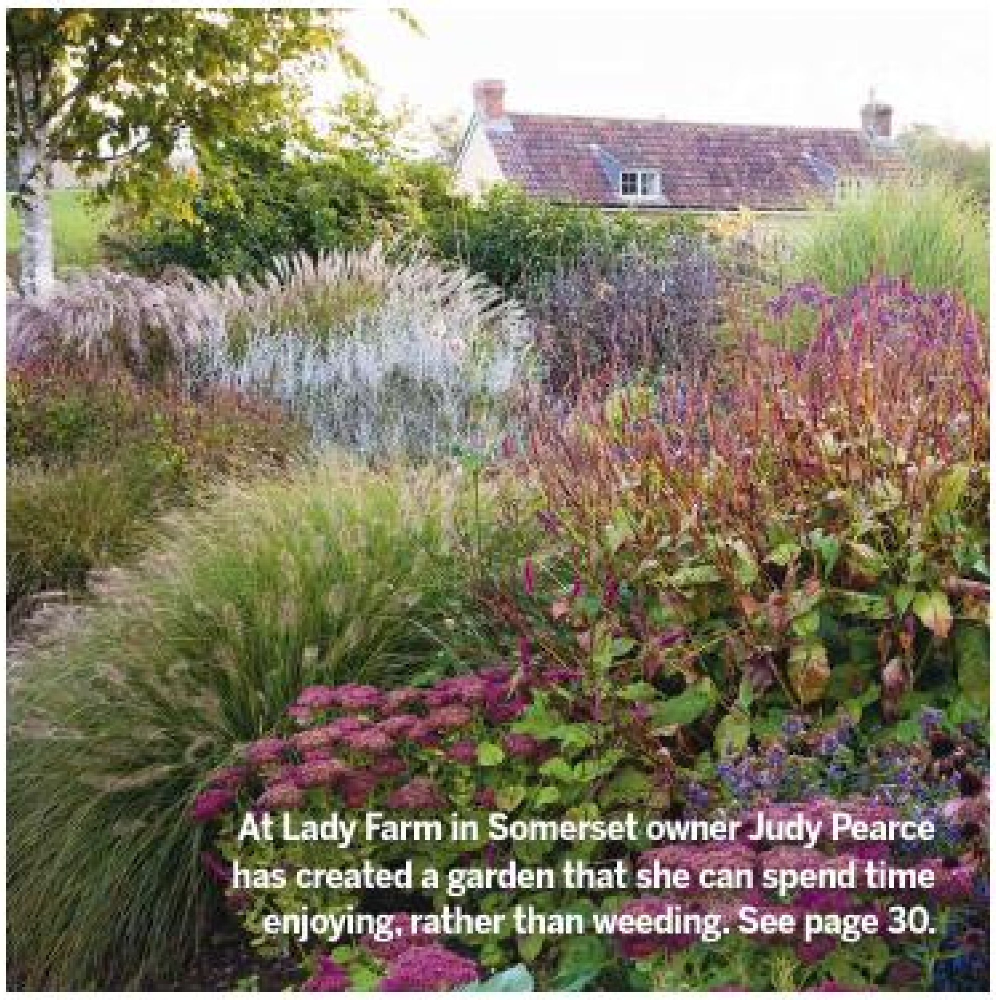
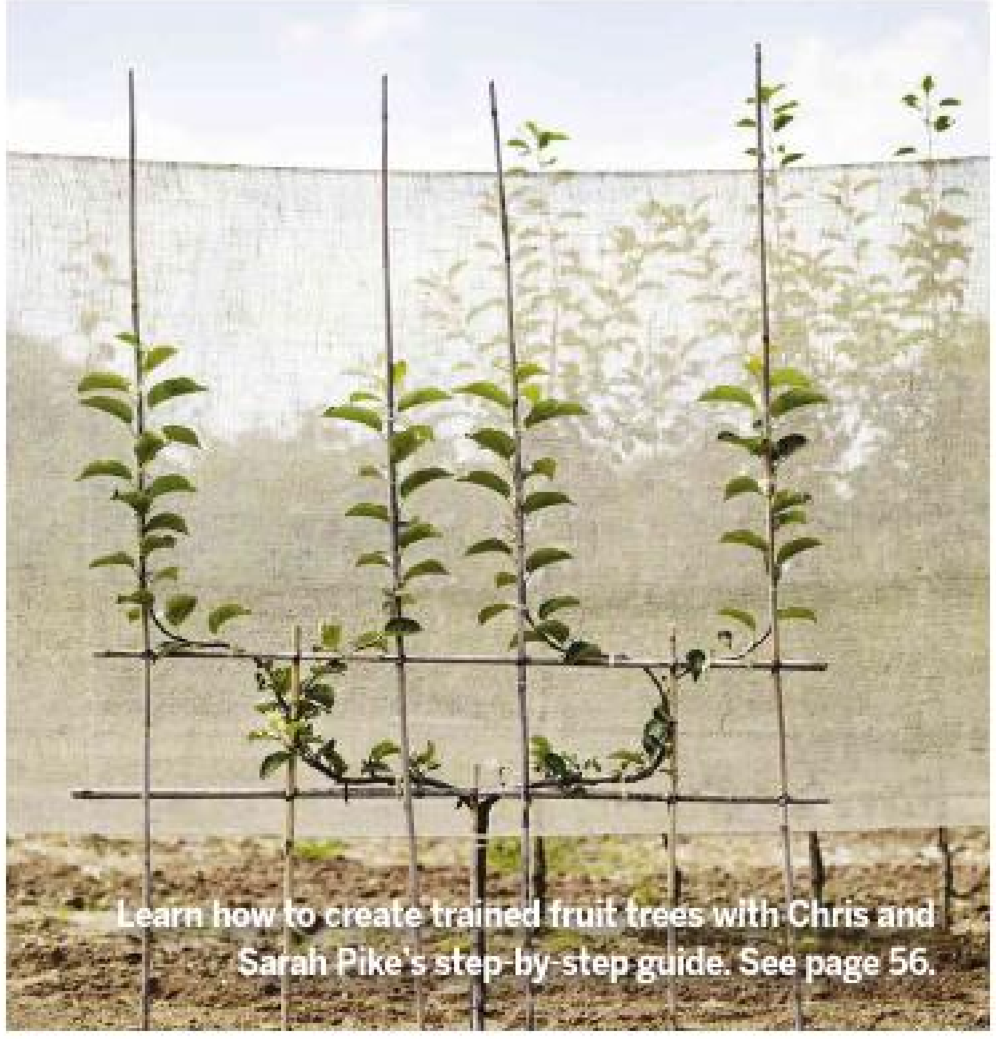


At Lady Farm in Somerset owner Judy Pearce has created a garden that she can spend time enjoying, rather than weeding. See page 30.



Learn how to create trained fruit trees with Chris and Sarah Pike's step-by-step guide. See page 56.

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ABIGAIL REX / GAP PHOTOS, ANDREW MONTGOMERY

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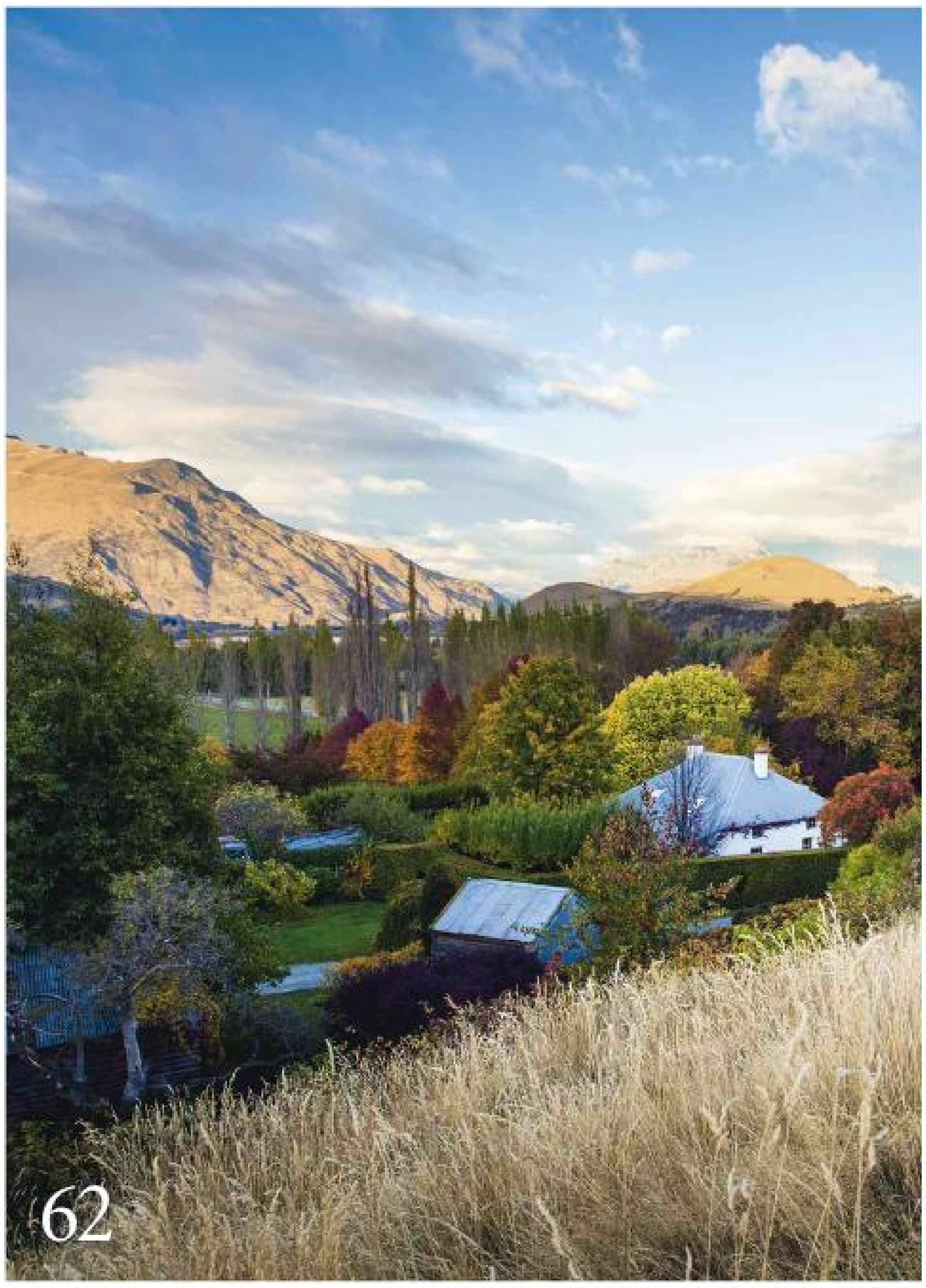

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Ornamental berries
Photograph by
Elle Moss

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CLAIRE TAKACS, ANDREW MONTGOMERY, ABIGAIL REX / GAP PHOTOS

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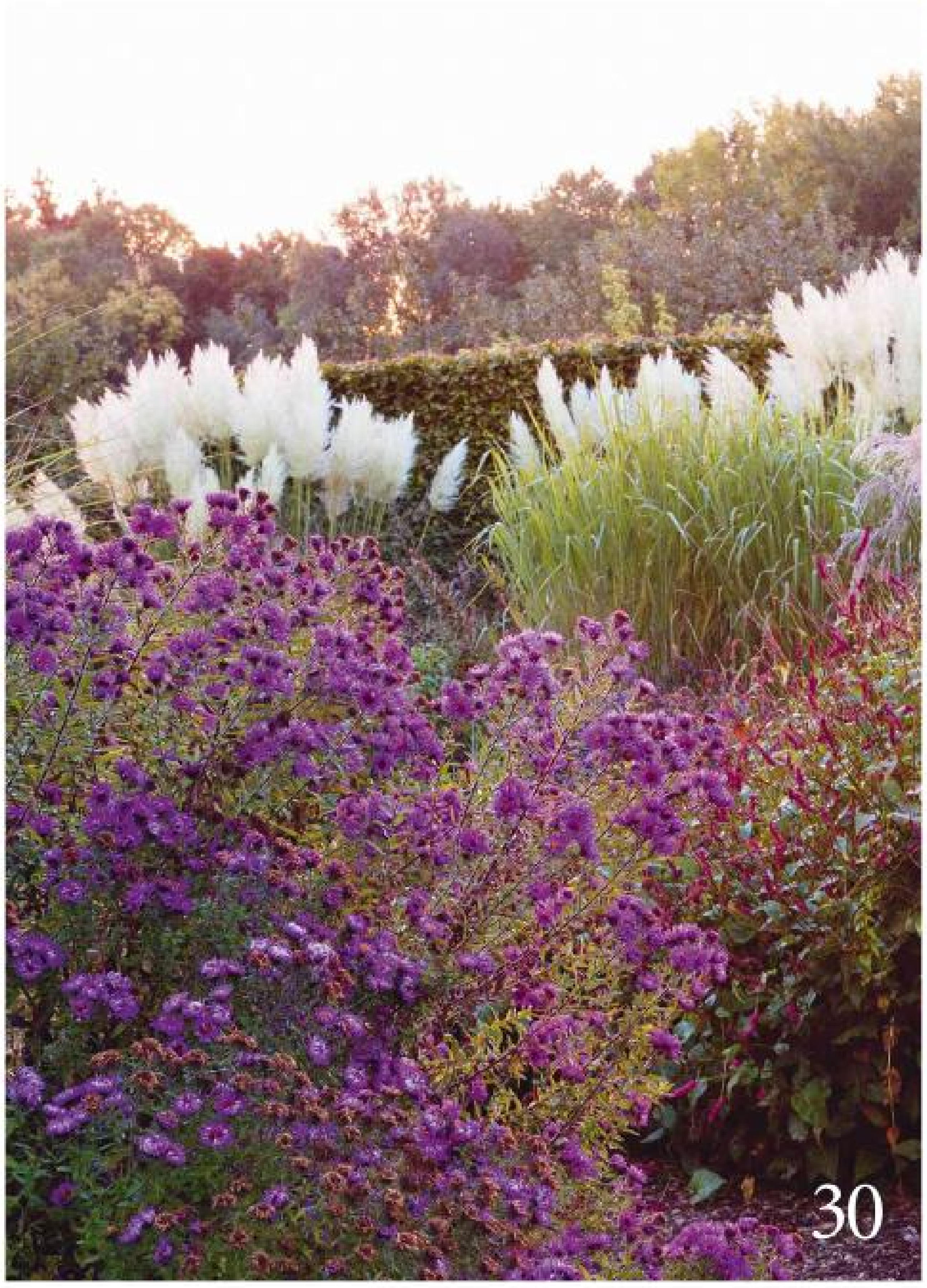

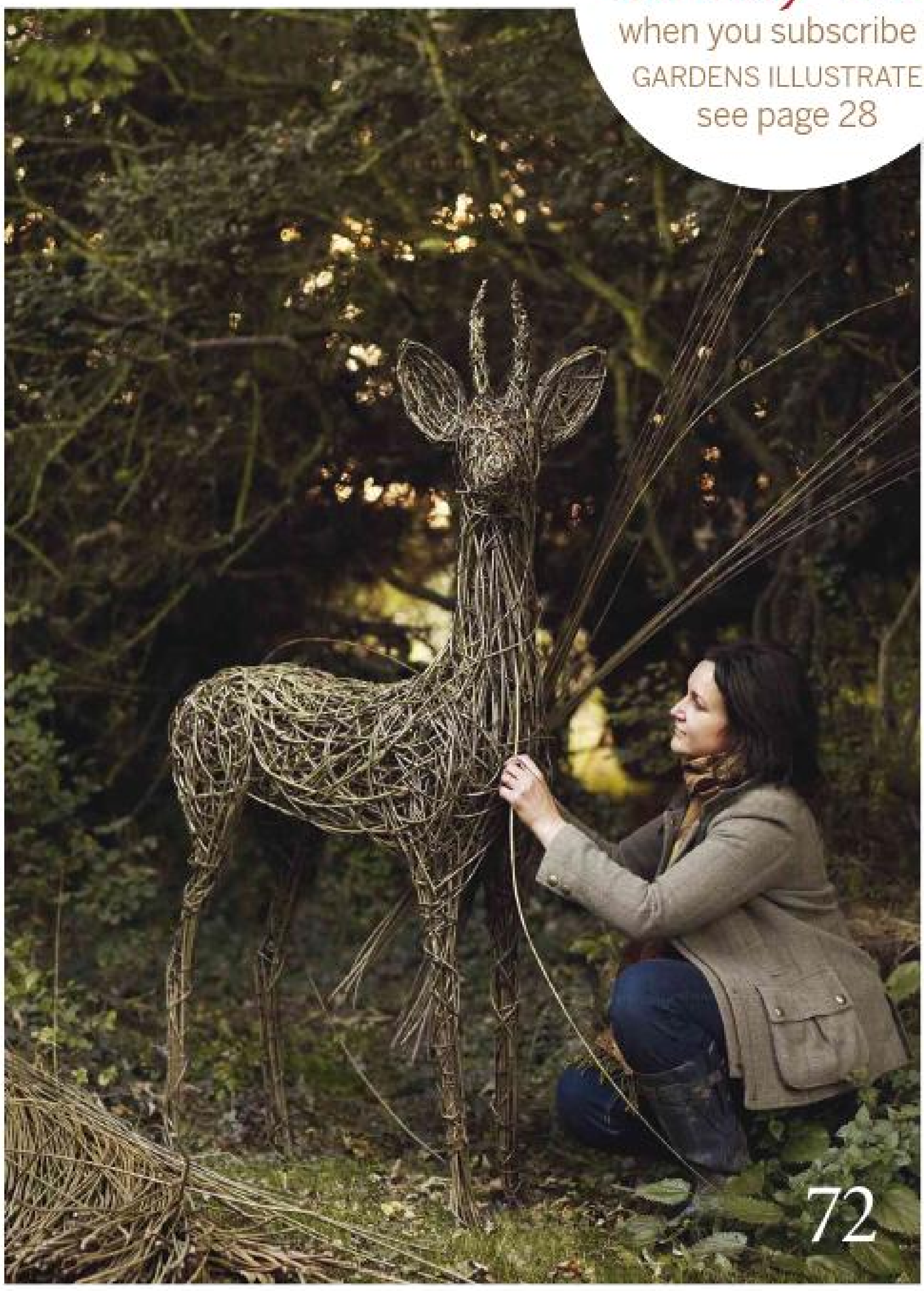

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READER OFFERS

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- 10 sets of **Fiskars QuikFit™ tools to win**, worth £84.94 each – see page 104
- Offer on **fruit trees from Branch Nurseries** – see page 105
- Save on **Carbon Gold's biochar Soil Improver** – see page 105

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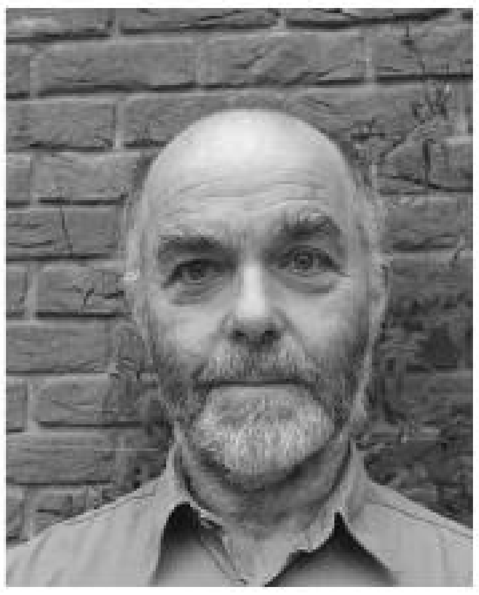
ABC Jan-Jun 2013 36,221

contributors

CHRISTINE REID

Christine is a writer based in Victoria, Australia, with an international background in journalism. Her main interest is the social and cultural history of gardens and designed landscapes. On page 62 she visits an amazing garden in New Zealand.

"Janet's garden is a work of art, created from scratch in a most inhospitable climate. Claire's pictures really capture its beauty."



MARTIN HUGHES-JONES

Martin runs both Holbrook Garden and Sampford Shrubs nursery, established in 1982, near Tiverton in Devon. Turn to page 46 to read his feature on plants with attractive berries to add autumn and winter interest to the garden.

"The close of the year without berrying plants would be a much poorer place. It's a joyous celebration of the season."

URSULA BUCHAN

Ursula studied history at the University of Cambridge before training as a gardener at RHS Wisley and at Kew. She went on to write gardening columns in several national newspapers. On page 40 she describes the role of women in horticulture during the Second World War.

"The story of the women who took over growing food in gardens and allotments in wartime is one that needs telling."

SUE WINGROVE

Sue works as the magazine's part-time features editor while refurbishing a house near Bath. She is looking forward to restoring a garden that was once the high point of a local open gardens scheme. No pressure then. Sue compiled the short list of hedge trimmers on page 97.

"Am I the only one to find power tools scary? This year I really needed to trim a tall Leylandii so had to bite the bullet."

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Incredible customer service, we were given lots of valuable advice and choice. Mr & Mrs Kelly

Everything concerning our experience with Majestic Trees was thoroughly professional. We were hugely impressed with the company and the helpful, efficient staff. Mr & Mrs Ferreira

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ANNIE GUILFOYLE

Annie Guilfoyle is a garden designer, Director of KLC School of Design and Garden Course Consultant at West Dean. Annie grew up in west Somerset and believes that the stunning landscape and the wonderful gardens of the West Country have shaped her as a designer and indeed continue to play a very large part in her work today. Annie is currently writing the monthly Design Ideas feature for GARDENS ILLUSTRATED.

Somerset is famed as the county of fine ciders, famous cheese, 'withy' plantations and gorgeous summer gardens – indeed the word Somerset means 'land of the summer people'. Our five-day tour will visit a selection of fine gardens and award-winning specialist nurseries. You will be based at **Ston Easton Park**, a superb Palladian mansion nestled within the Mendip Hills and now a four-star country house hotel with fine grounds and award-winning restaurant.

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EXCLUSIVE READER HOLIDAY

The Botanic Nursery

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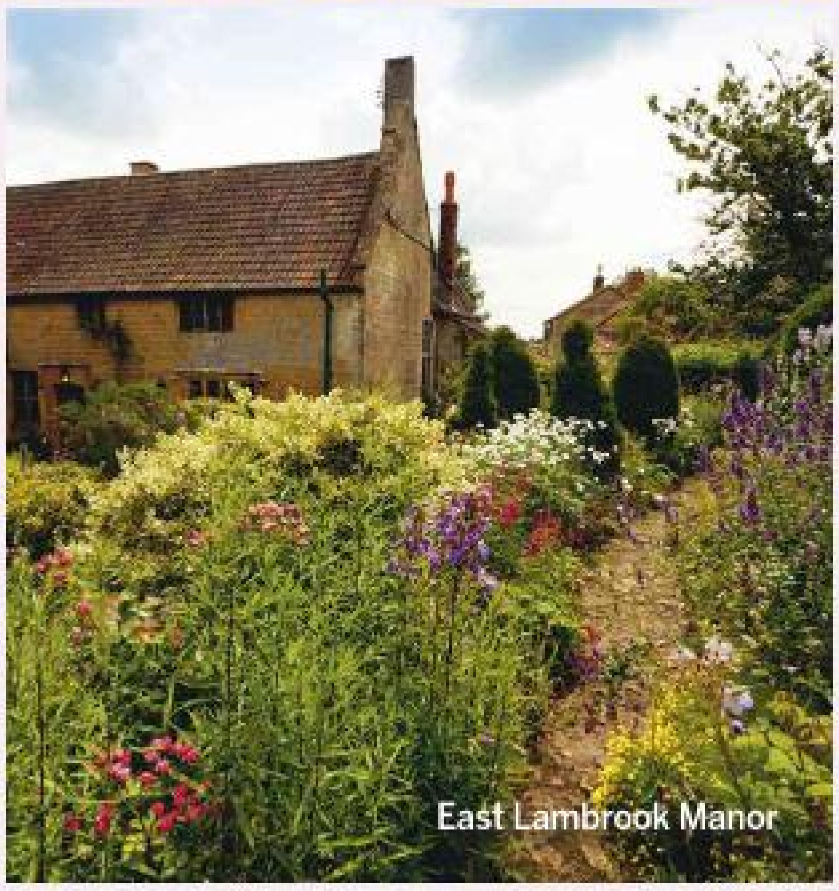
East Lambrook Manor

HOLT FARM & EAST LAMBROOK MANOR: CHRISTOPHER NICHOLSON / ALAMY; THE BOTANICS NURSERY: JASON INGRAM; PHOTOLIBRARY / ALAMY; IFORD MANOR: STEVE TAYLOR ARPS / ALAMY

greatest Edwardian garden designers. While in Wiltshire we also visit foxglove specialists **The Botanic Nursery** and **Special Plants** where nurserywoman Derry Watkins offers a tempting array of unusual annuals and perennials. And then there's the distinguished Arts & Crafts National Trust garden of **The Courts**. Back in Somerset **East Lambrook Manor** is one of the country's definitive cottage gardens, created by the late, great, plantswoman Margery Fish. Finally, we have the very great pleasure of an invitation from garden designer **Penelope Hobhouse** to see her new Somerset garden.

Plus we'll be visiting some of the area's top eateries for lunch, be given a tour of our hotel's own Victorian kitchen garden by the head gardener at Ston Easton Park, and have free time to visit the shops and galleries of the historic town of Bruton.

This tour has been arranged exclusively for readers of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED by Boxwood Tours, Quality Garden Holidays, a specialist garden tour company set up in 1990, directed by Sue and Brian Macdonald, Kew-trained, professional gardeners.

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The price per person sharing is £1,898 (single supplement of £250 levied by the hotel).

The price includes all travel between gardens and lunches plus dinner, bed and breakfast for four nights at Ston Easton Park hotel (wine included with the evening meals). The price does not include extras at the hotel, travel insurance, or travel to and from the start/finish point.

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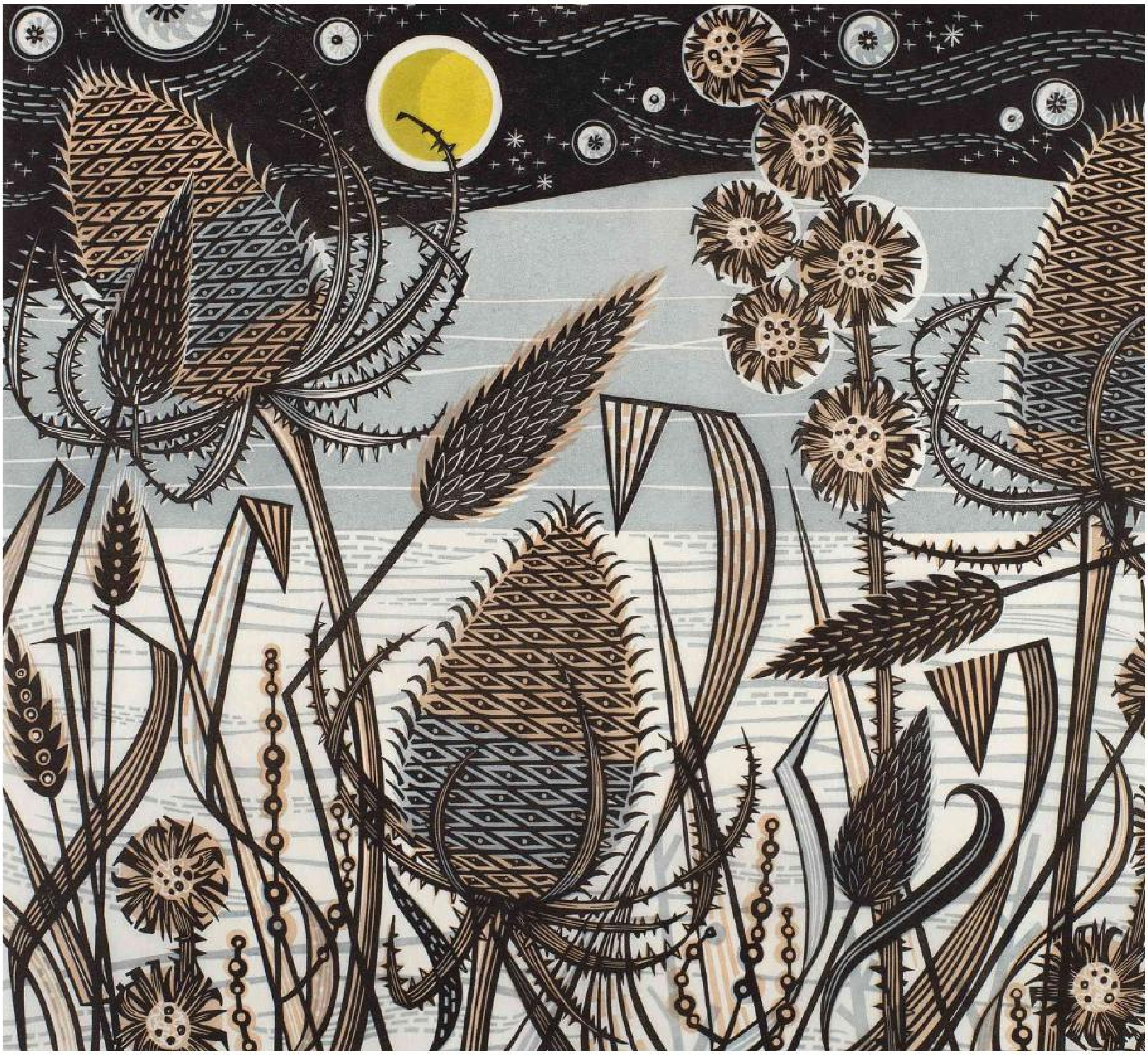

EXHIBITION

Landscape inspiration

Seen on prints, cards and fabrics, the distinctive patterns of richly coloured architectural plants set against the sky are instantly recognisable as the work of artist and printmaker Angie Lewin. This month she has a major new exhibition starting at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, in which she has taken inspiration from the park's 500-acre landscape to create a series of new prints and watercolours using techniques such as wood engraving, linocut, silkscreen, lithograph, watercolour and collage. All of these works will be available to buy. Plus look out for the series of talks and events related to the exhibition including a two-day wood engraving course led by Angie in February 2014.

16 November 2013 – 23 February 2014. ysp.org.uk

• See also our Angie Lewin competition in the October issue or on our website gardensillustrated.com

Peter Beales

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Environmental experts are calling for support from businesses in a challenge to save our peat bogs. The hope is to ensure that one million hectares, equal to a third of UK peatlands are in good condition or under restoration management by 2020. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) wants to stop and where possible reverse the damage to these important habitats, caused largely by water drainage or peat extraction.

Peatlands cover less than three per cent of the Earth's land surface yet the importance of this increasingly rare and threatened habitat is now recognised for the vital role it plays in improving water quality, alleviating flooding, helping wildlife biodiversity and aiding the storage of carbon – indeed the IUCN says that three billion tonnes of carbon is stored in peat bogs, which risks being released into the atmosphere if we fail to stop the damage. iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org

News clippings – keeping you up to date

TERCENTENARY A new website has been launched as the countdown to the 'Capability' Brown tercentenary in 2015 begins. The website gives details of the life and work of one of our our most influential landscape architects, and in time it will flag up celebratory events and activities. capabilitybrown.org

SEED SELECTION Suttons Seeds has added some new categories to its catalogue including New French Market Vegetables, Cut Flower collections and Wildlife Sanctuary with varieties chosen for their nectar and pollen supply. suttons.co.uk

BALLYNAHONE BOG AT DAWN BY BEN HALL 2020VISION, JASON INGRAM, SEAN MALYON

PLANT HEALTH

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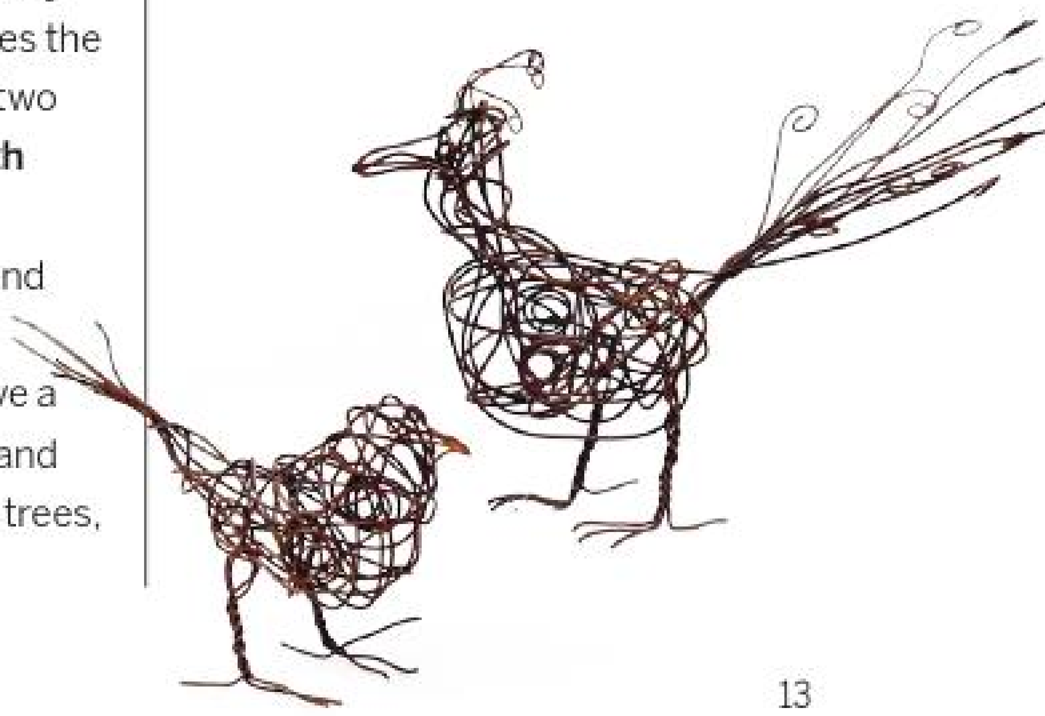
These little birds will add fun and charm to your home or garden sitting on a ledge or shelf, or hung from a seasonal branch display. Made out of rusted wire, they come in four different designs at £2.50 each.

re-foundobjects.com



GARDEN HISTORY

Victorian conservatory saved

Following a ten-year, fund-raising project and a year of restoration, the Victorian conservatory at Wentworth Castle in Yorkshire has been rescued from collapse and returned to its former glory. The 4,000-piece iron frame, which dates back to 1885, has been dismantled and labelled, then each element cleaned or re-cast as necessary. Over the summer all the glass panes (each a slightly different size) were replaced with toughened safety glass and finally the plants both inside and out of the conservatory planted up. Now open to visitors daily, along with new visitor facilities. wentworthcastle.org

Restoration work on the 4,000-piece iron-frame conservatory at Wentworth Castle nears completion.

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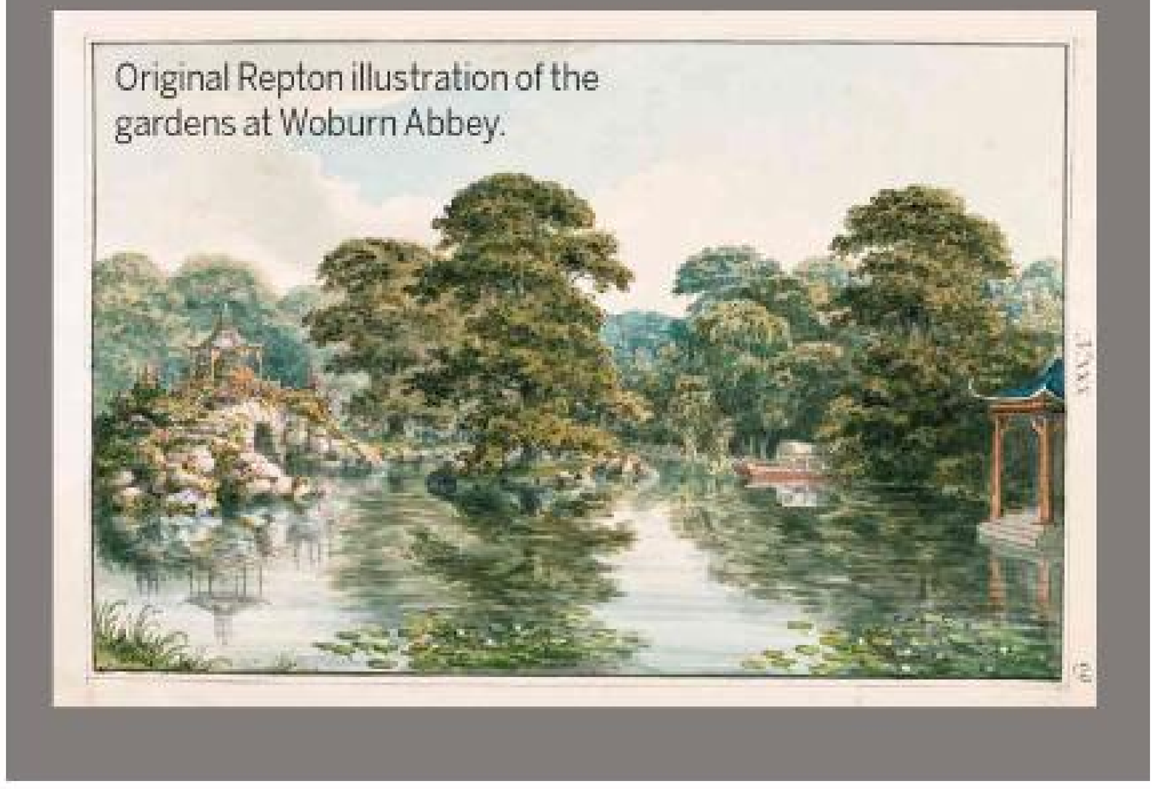
Diary

- **American Society of Botanical Artists annual exhibition**
New York's premier showcase of contemporary botanical art from 45 international artists. Until 22 November, 10am-6pm. Horticultural Society of New York, 148 West 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 100018 USA. thehort.org
- **Cruelty to Plants at the Garden Museum**
Richard Wentworth, new artist in residence, discusses his affection for horticulture, set against the way we tame nature. He asks whether there is 'nature' in London, a city whose river is canalised and whose sky is punctuated by aircraft. 7 November, 6.30-8pm, £15. Garden Museum, Lambeth Palace Road, London SW1 7LB. Tel 020 7401 8865, gardenmuseum.org.uk
- **RHS Wisley Garden Free Day**
The gardens at RHS Wisley are open to visit free of charge. Enjoy autumn colours plus seasonal menus at the cafés. 8 November. RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB. Tel 0845 260 9000, rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley
- **The daffodil – the remarkable story of the world's most popular spring flower**
Garden expert and writer Noël Kingsbury delves into the horticulture, ecology, history and psychology of our favourite spring flower – the daffodil. 9 November, 1.45-4pm, £25. West Dean, Nr Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0QZ. Tel 0844 499 4408, westdean.org.uk
- **Pruning Fruit Trees**
Easy-to-follow tutorial accompanied by practical demonstrations to give you the basic knowledge and confidence to train and prune a range of fruiting trees. 13 November, 10.30am-12.30pm or 2-4pm, £32. Barnsdale Gardens, The Avenue, Exton, Oakham, Rutland LE15 8AH. Book on 01572 813200, barnsdalegardens.co.uk
- **Whichford Pottery Annual Sale**
Selection of terracotta pots and containers for sale plus ideas on winter planting. 15 November – 1 December. Whichford Pottery, Nr Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire CV36 5PG. Tel 01608 684416, whichfordpottery.com
- **Humphry Repton study day at Woburn Abbey**
Take an indepth look at the career of Humphry Repton and learn more about what made him such a remarkable landscape gardener. Includes tour of gardens. 20 November, 10am-4pm, £40. Woburn Abbey, Woburn Park, Bedfordshire MK17 9WA. Tel 01525 290333, www.woburn.co.uk



Original Repton illustration of the gardens at Woburn Abbey.

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Jez Stamp

The Institute of Horticulture's Young Horticulturist of the Year, and one-time runner for BBC *Gardeners' World*, Jez Stamp is now developing a soft landscaping company

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest garden memory It was the wider landscape, the woodland and farmland beyond our garden that ignited my passion for nature. I remember 'expeditions' to see the early purple orchids or badger cubs on a summer's evening.

First plant love *Limnanthes douglasii*. Of course to me it was just the poached egg flower. My first little allocated patch had a meagre row of spinach and a smothering of bright yellow limnanthes; I was clearly a low-maintenance gardener at that time.

Horticultural training I did the RHS certificate and advanced certificate at commendation level and an HND in landscape design at the Pickard School of Garden Design. I also spent five years working with inspirational owner Douglas Harris at Penwood Nurseries in Berkshire doing everything from propagation to giving customers advice.

Your horticultural heroes Dan Pearson – his observations of the natural spaces around us and understanding of plants in their native habitats, and the marriage of this in a garden setting, has always felt very right to me. Plus those great plant hunters who underwent epic voyages and expeditions in the name of science and discovery.

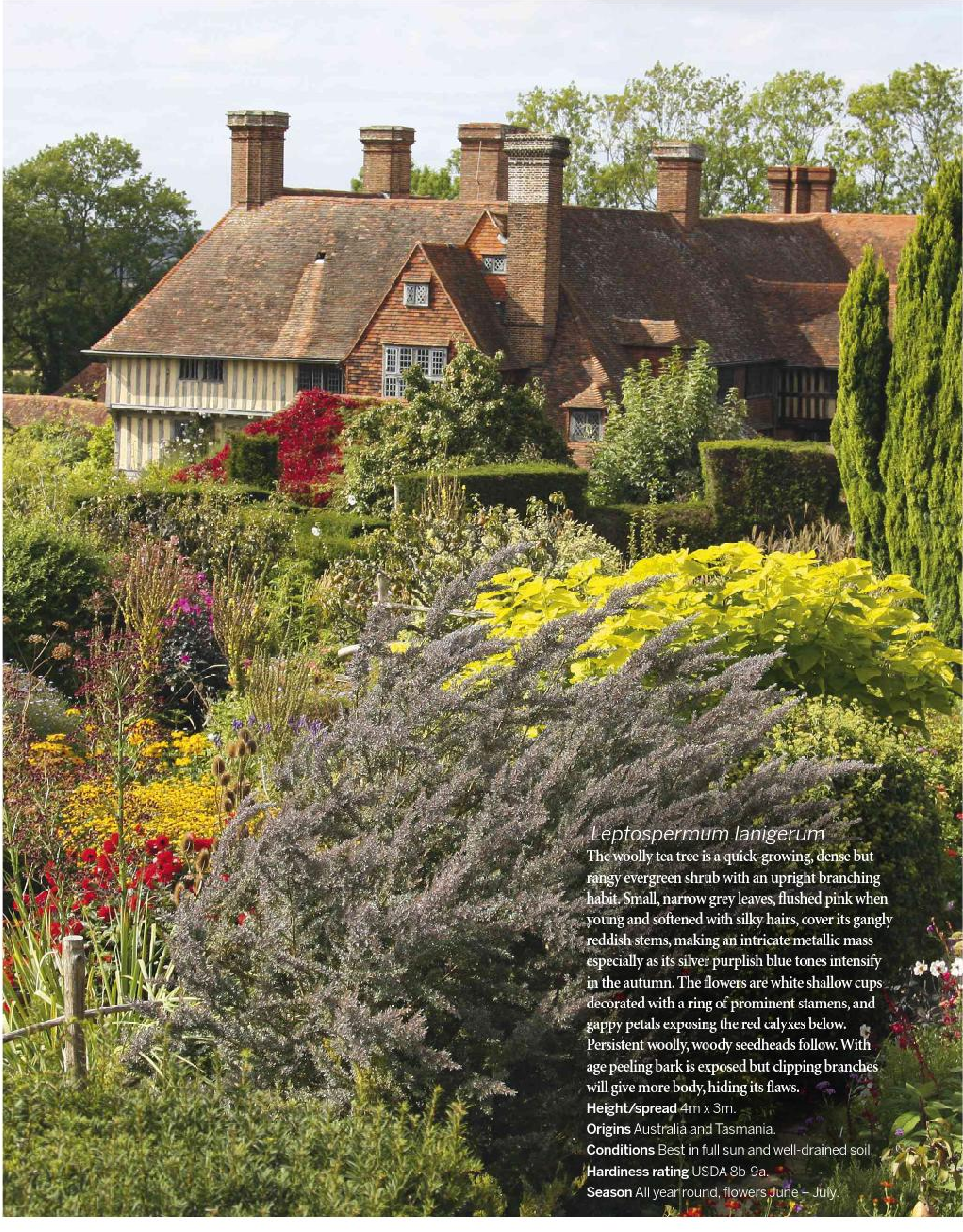
Influential landscape Celtic Hill Fort, Ladle Hill, Hampshire. The sculpted undulations of this ancient hillscape make it one of my favourite places in the world and it has provided me with so much insight into the way I think and see things.

Favourite planting style Oh gosh – I daren't commit to an answer. I gather as much joy from huge swathes of prairie-style perennials and grasses as I do from the clean geometric lines of some city gardens. However, character and atmosphere are important in a garden, if it doesn't feel right to me, I just don't like it, regardless of whether it's supposed to be good or not.

What principles have guided your attitude to horticulture Hard work and a love of it. An inherent passion for the outdoors that stems from the heart and, most importantly, never being content with not knowing. Once I get hooked on something it's hard to stop me.

Most embarrassing moment related to plants Well, I did lie to the police and customs officials crossing the Chilean border with a bag full of plant seeds. When they found out they weren't best pleased. It was 1am in the morning, cold and dark; let's just say things got a little tense…

Contact email jez.stamp@hotmail.co.uk **Twitter** @JezStamp



Leptospermum lanigerum

The woolly tea tree is a quick-growing, dense but rangy evergreen shrub with an upright branching habit. Small, narrow grey leaves, flushed pink when young and softened with silky hairs, cover its gangly reddish stems, making an intricate metallic mass especially as its silver purplish blue tones intensify in the autumn. The flowers are white shallow cups decorated with a ring of prominent stamens, and gappy petals exposing the red calyxes below. Persistent woolly, woody seedheads follow. With age peeling bark is exposed but clipping branches will give more body, hiding its flaws.

Height/spread 4m x 3m.

Origins Australia and Tasmania.

Conditions Best in full sun and well-drained soil.

Hardiness rating USDA 8b-9a.

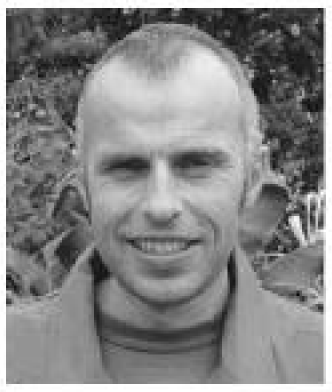
Season All year round, flowers June – July.

FERGUS GARRETT

November plants

Make the most of autumn's richly coloured foliage and the abundance of bright, ripe berries before winter frosts really begin to bite

WORDS **FERGUS GARRETT** PHOTOGRAPHS **SHARON PEARSON**



Fergus Garrett is a plantsman and head gardener at Great Dixter in East Sussex where he continues the legacy of the late, great Christopher Lloyd. Fergus also lectures, writes and serves on Royal Horticultural Society committees.

Vitis coignetiae

A bold and vigorous vine able to scramble up the tallest trees. The young foliage and twining tendrils are fawn in colour ageing dark green and becoming coarse textured and leathery. Covered in a deep rusty down on the underside, the leaves are shallowly lobed and more or less round, impressively spanning over 30cm in diameter. In the autumn the best clones turn deep beetroot purple with flushes of vivid crimson bringing the scene alive, before shedding to the ground. AGM*.

Spread 30m.
Origins Japan. First introduced plants were seedlings by Madame Coignet.
Conditions In most soil in sun or part shade.
Hardiness rating RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b[†].
Season May – November.

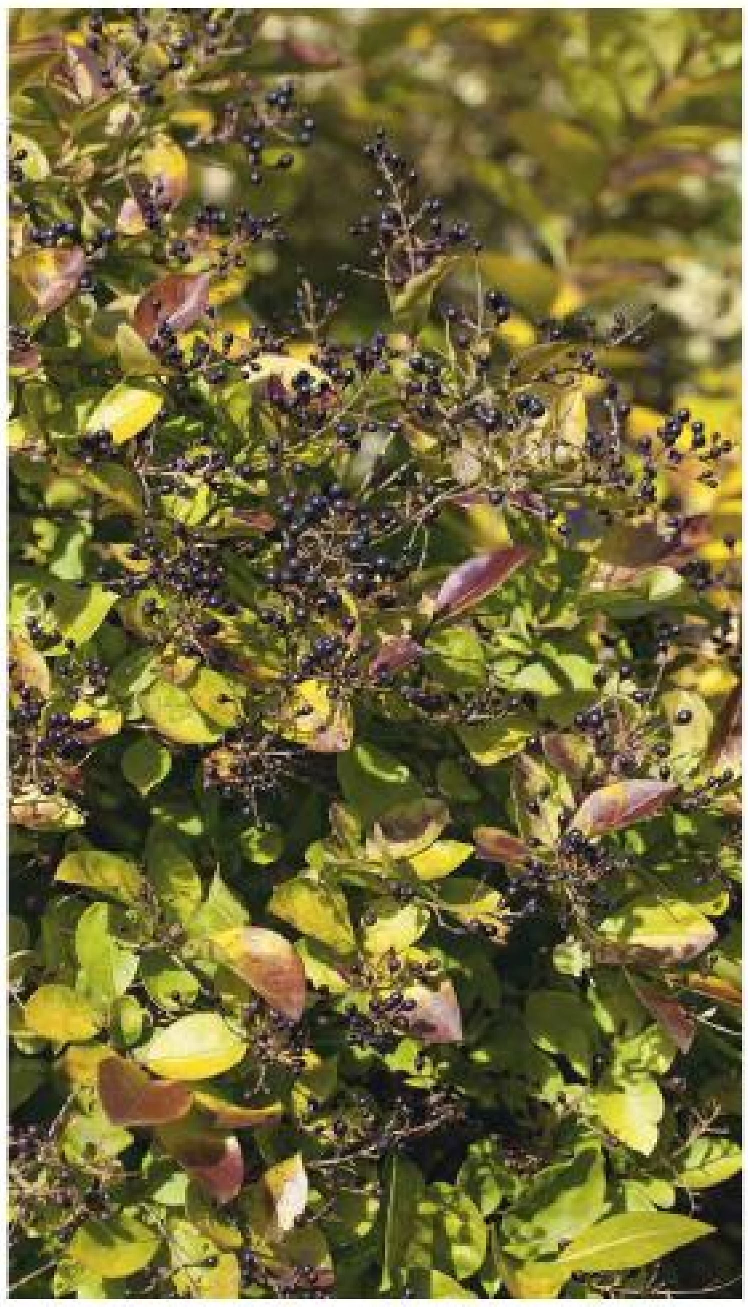
FERGUS GARRETT

Crataegus orientalis

Sculpted by winds, this can be craggy looking in its native mountain habitat, but give it the comfort of good garden soil it and it makes an elegant shape of flattish, spreading habit with thorned branches, well spaced and lightly pendulous. Its young growth and deeply lobed leaves are grey and woolly making it look smoky silver. The flowers are large (sometimes 2cm across), chalky white, and produced in corymbs followed by similar-sized, globular, rich-orange, edible haws that set it alight from October to November. AGM.

Height/spread 4m x 3m.
Origins Parts of eastern Mediterranean, central and eastern Anatolia to northern Iran.
Conditions Most soils in sun.
Hardiness rating USDA 4a-8b.
Season Year round.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society
[†]Hardiness ratings given where available



JAN SMITH / GAP PHOTOS

Ligustrum 'Vicaryi'

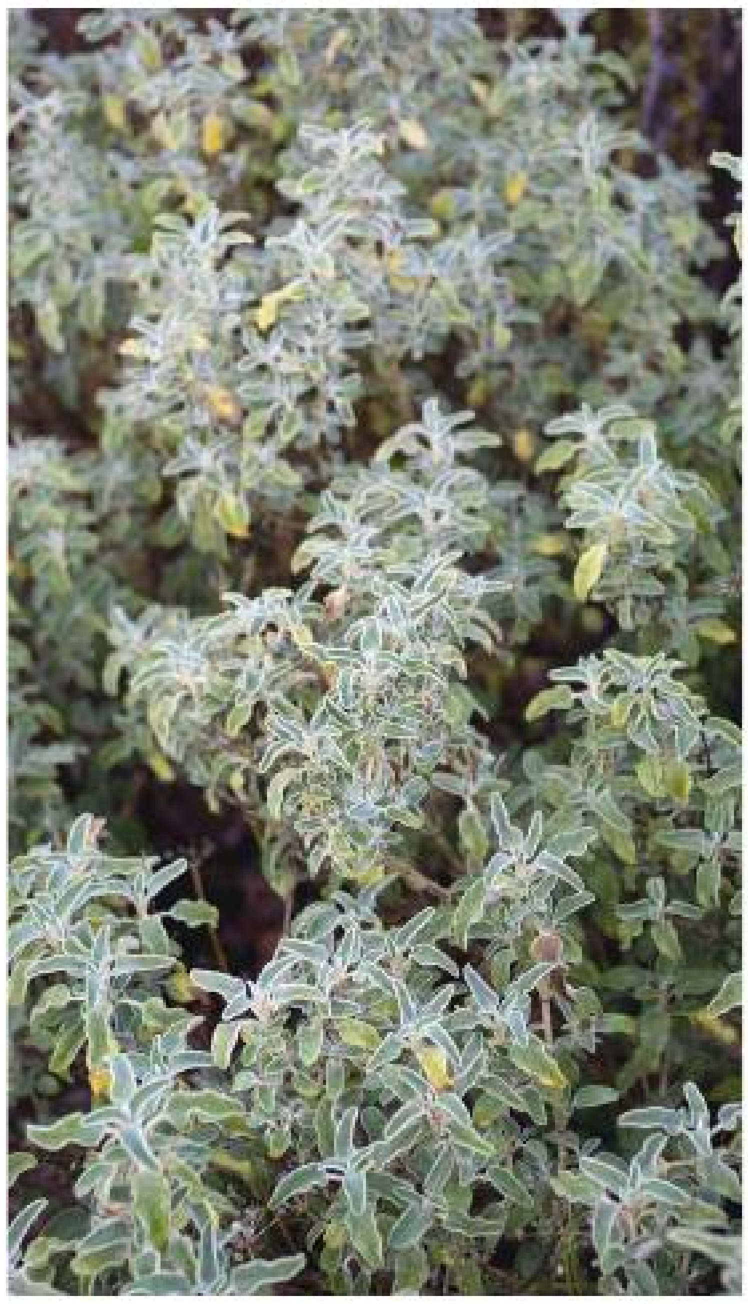
A medium-sized, semi-evergreen shrub consisting of a dense thicket of upright, branching stems furnished with opposite facing, glossy, ovate, golden yellow leaves flushed lime green when young. In July short, stiff panicles are packed with dull, white tubular flowers that scent the air with mulberries. Small, round, black berries dusted in a light bloom follow, lasting well into the winter. Its yellow foliage makes an impressive sight and acts as a catalyst to neighbouring plants.

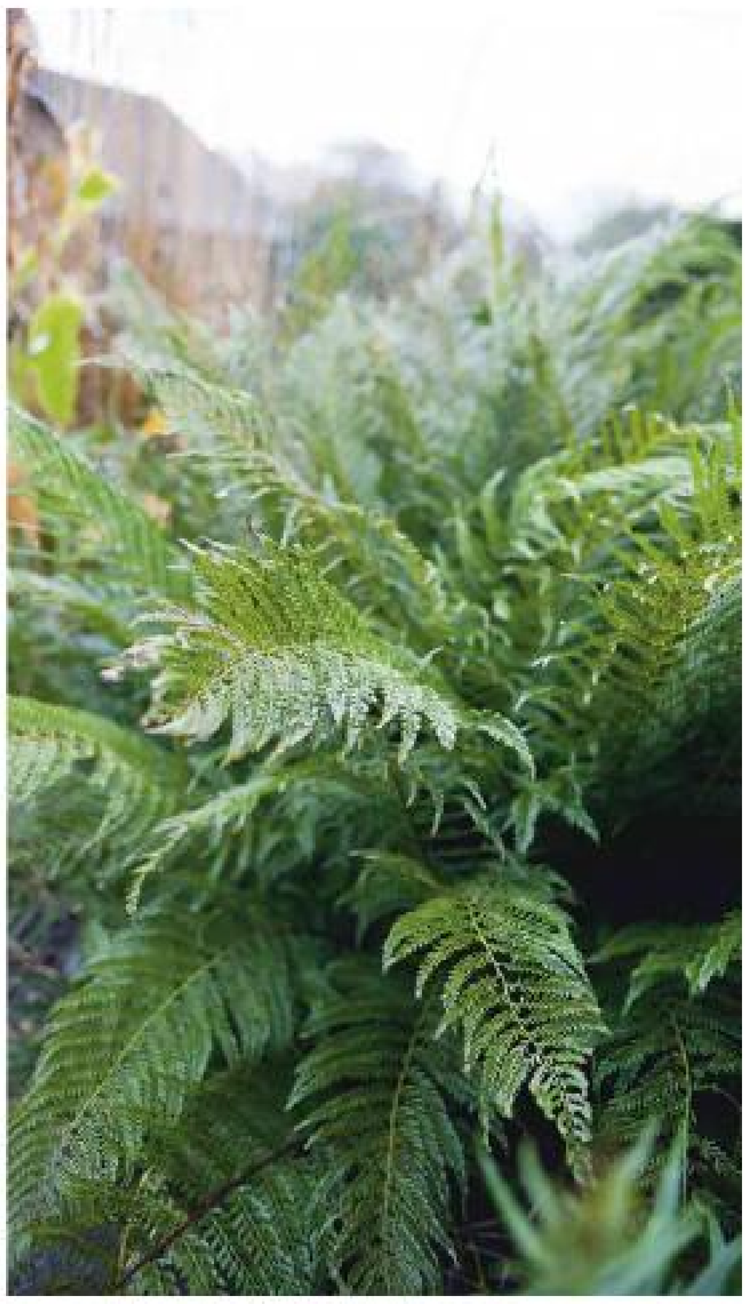
Height/spread 3m x 3m.
Origins Probably a hybrid between *Ligustrum ovalifolium* 'Aureum' and *L. vulgare*.
Conditions Tolerant of a wide range of soils. Best in full sun.
Hardiness rating USDA 5a-8b.
Season Flowers June – July, foliage all year.

Phlomis grandiflora 'Lloyd's Variety'

A wide-spreading, evergreen shrub with narrow, sage-like, grey-green leaves, deeply wrinkled in texture, and showing prominent pale undersides. Both foliage and young stems are covered in minute hairs creating a soft textured wave of silver, making good foil for all other colours. Bright-yellow, hooded flowers cover the bush mid-summer. These are held in distinctive whorls in the upper leaf axils. Attractive seedheads follow but plants look cleaner if these are removed. Our specimen in the Long Border wraps itself around sugar-candy pink phloxes.

Height/spread 1m x 2m.
Origins Mediterranean.
Conditions Well-drained soil in full sun.
Hardiness rating RHS H4, USDA 7a-11.
Season Year round.





Polystichum setiferum 'Pulcherrimum Bevis'

The king of hardy ferns with wide, tall, evergreen mounds of tri-pinnate fronds, lush with rich, glossy green. The feathery upright lacy foliage is long, tapering to an acute point and further divided into narrowed pinnae and multi-lobed pinnules. It keeps its lustre, remaining unsullied from summer following through to early spring. Before this you should cut down the old fronds flush to the hairy chelicerous brown crowns to make way for the newly unfurling croziers. AGM.

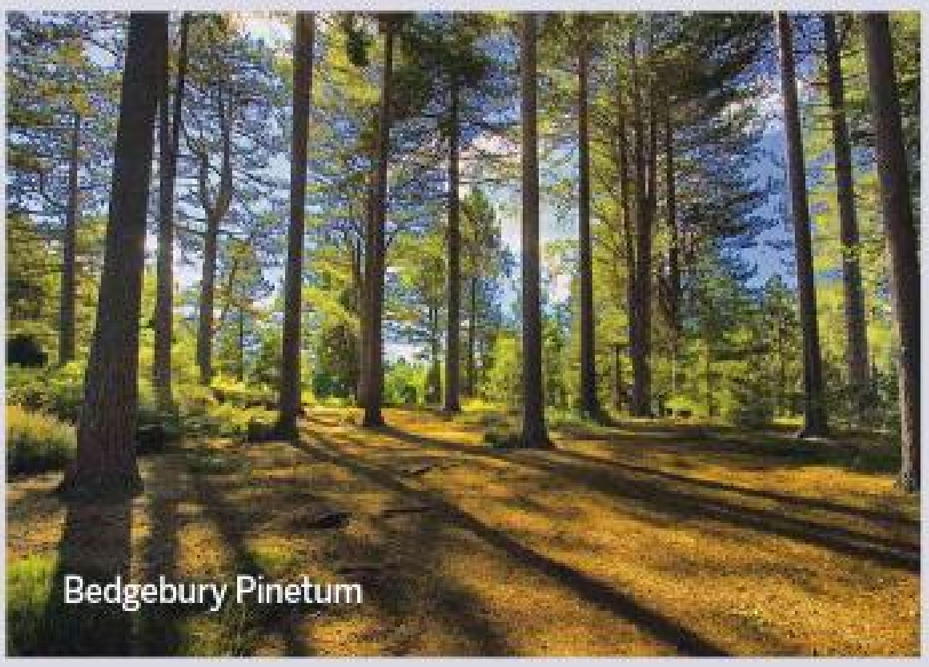
Height/spread 1m x 1m.
Origins Discovered in 1876 by Devon hedgelayer Mr Bevis.
Conditions Best in good soil in semi shade.
Hardiness rating RHS H7, USDA 5a-9a.
Season May – March.

Places to visit

Fergus shares some of his favourite places to see plants at their best.

With winter snapping at your ankles why not warm your bones and dream about exotic lands in the **Palm House, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew**?

Designed by Decimus Burton and engineered by Richard Turner between 1844-1848, Kew's Palm House is considered by many as the most important surviving Victorian iron and glass structure in the world.



Bedgebury Pinetum

DAVID PLUMMER / ALAMY

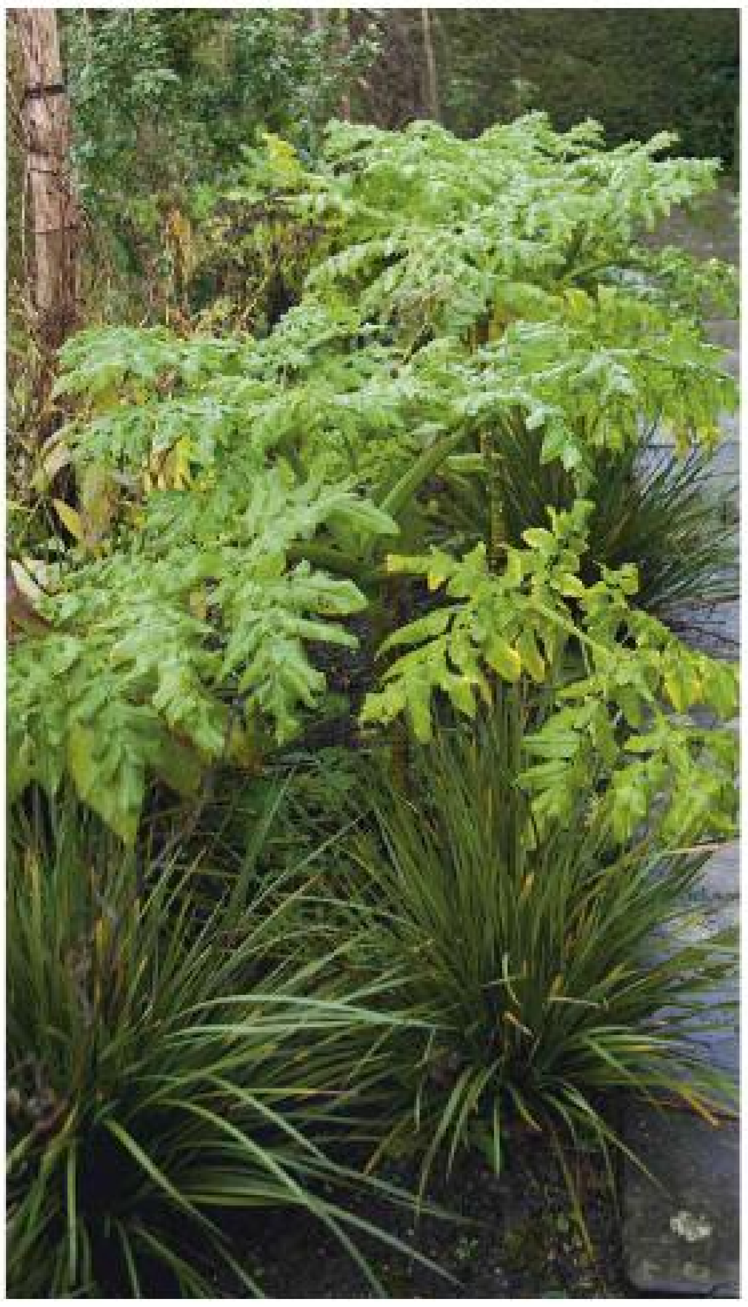
Dripping with lush and exotic vegetation, and with a Marine exhibit in the basement, this is a perfect place to dream. Throughout winter, it's open every day, 9.30am-3.45pm, except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AB. kew.org

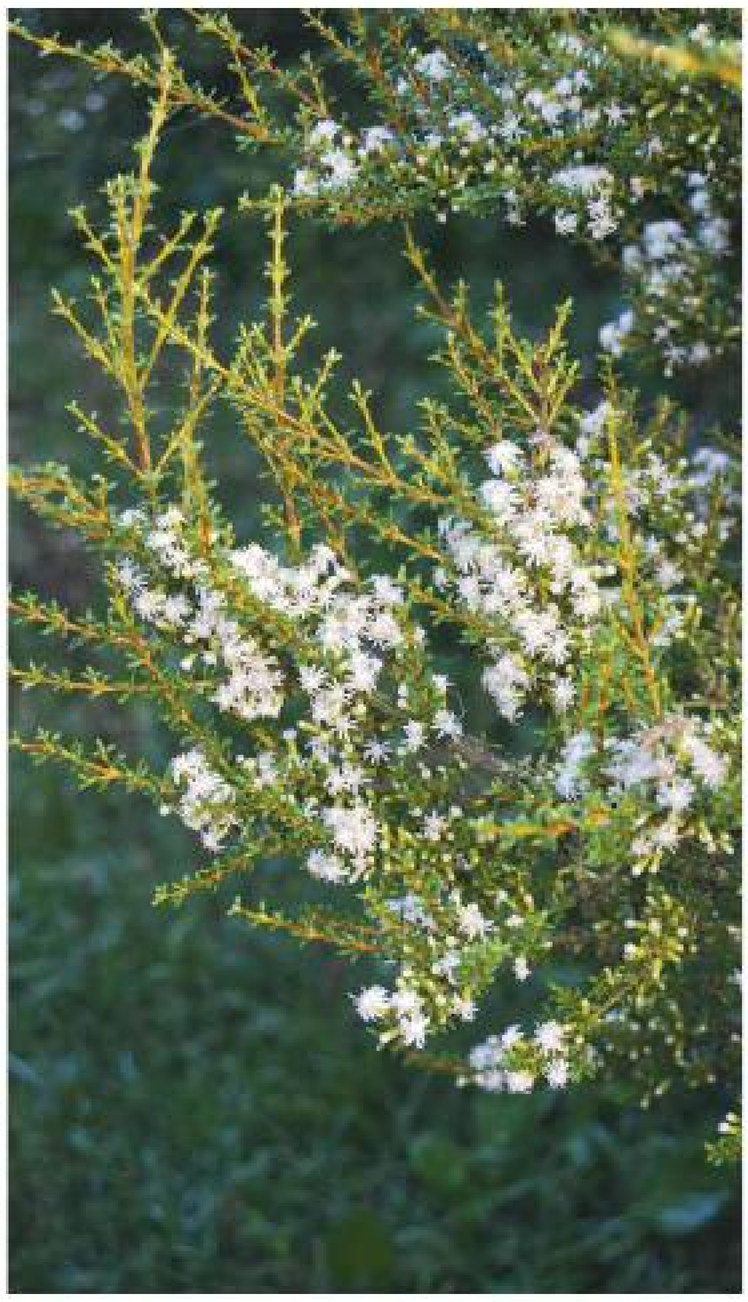
Bedgebury Pinetum in Kent is managed for the nation by the Forestry Commission. Started in

Melanoselinum decipiens

Bizarre-looking, monocarpic, woody perennial. Thick, upright, single stems, brown and woody at the base, gradually turning green, decoratively scarred by rings left from earlier leaves, support an umbrella of bi-pinnate foliage akin to celery on steroids. These radiate out from succulent, keeled-leaf petioles, forming impressive lacy crowns. The freshly emerging foliage is tinted bronze followed in early summer by extraordinary flowering umbels of dirty pink that create a broad and substantial head. Its finale offers black seedheads, impressive bones and a graceful decline.

Height/spread 2m x 1.5m.
Origins Laurel Forests of Madeira.
Conditions Moist, well-drained soil in sun or part shade.
Season Year round.





LAWRENCE WRIGHT

Olearia solandri

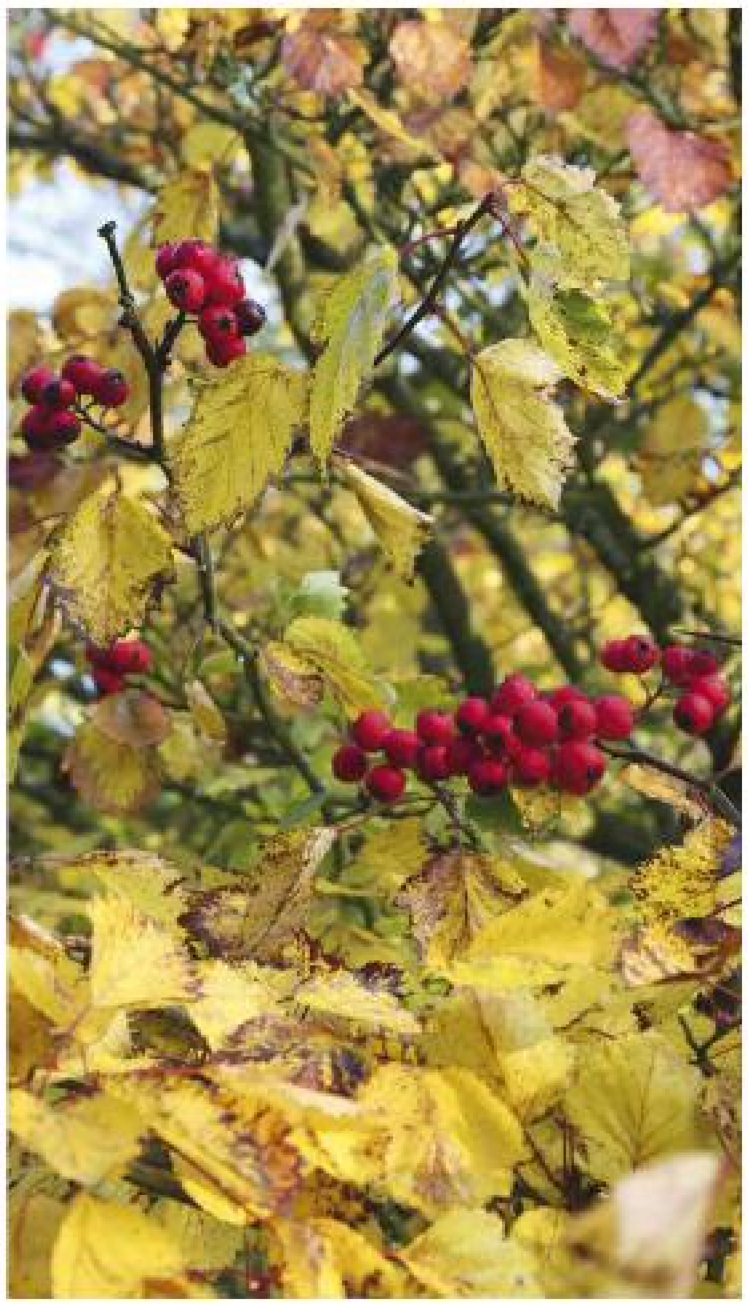
An unassuming shrub that is deserving of much respect with angular, erect branches, clad in narrow, 6mm-long, linear, dark-green leaves with looks not too dissimilar to a large tree heath. The summer flowers are small and insignificant, resembling camel-coloured fluff. Now and again the bush fills your nostrils with the scent of heliotrope but it is difficult to pinpoint whether this is directly from the blooms or on the air. Old plants need hard pruning to encourage the upright young growth flushed with yellow, giving the plant its characteristic yellow-green undertones and jagged outline.

Height/spread 4m x 3m.
Origins New Zealand.
Conditions Well-drained soil in full sun.
Season Year round.

Crataegus ellwangeriana

This wild-looking yet handsome small tree is seldom written about. It has a short trunk, decorated with flaking, chestnut-brown bark, a stout skeleton and a loose tangle of heavily armed ascending branches that carry a wide crown of ovate, shallowly lobed and sharply serrated leaves. The flowers are off-white, blushed pink and carried in loose corymbs. These are sweetly foetid attracting a host of small pollinating flies. Large, edible, bright-red fruit follow in late summer dangling off long stalks, and weighing the branches down as the leaves turn a bright mustard yellow.

Height/spread 3m x 3m.
Origins NE North America.
Conditions Most soils in sun or part shade.
Season May, October – November.

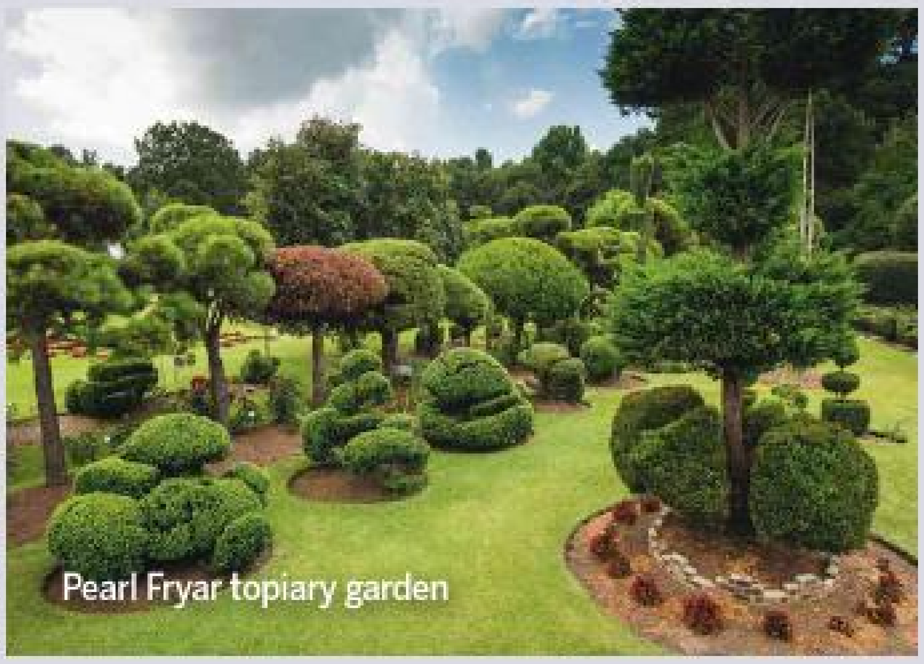


FERGUS GARRETT

1840 by the Beresford Hope family, this is always a good place to go to see trees including many dwarf conifers. Open all year round except for Christmas Day. Lady Oak Lane, Goudhurst, Kent TN17 2SL. forestry.gov.uk/bedgebury

If you're planning a November visit to the USA to see the legenday New England autumn foliage head a little further south to the **LongHouse Reserve**, and you won't be disappointed. Founded by Jack Lenor Larsen, this exceptional garden is divided into a series of rooms, each with its own feel, and with exquisite collections of plants, sculpture and art around every corner. 133 Hands Creek Road, East Hampton, New York 11937, USA. longhouse.org.

Another 700-odd miles further south is **Pearl Fryar Topiary Garden**. Pearl Fryar started his remarkable garden from scratch in the early 1980s with little garden experience. By 1985 he had been awarded 'Yard of the Month' in Bishopville. And by the 1990s Pearl's garden had national attention. His extraordinary topiary pieces are trimmed every four to six weeks. Bishopville, South Carolina 29010, USA. pearlfryar.com



Pearl Fryar topiary garden

RICHARD ELLIS / ALAMY

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Dark arts

As daylight hours get shorter it's time to take stock and prepare for winter – and discover the dark secret of a flowering Christmas cactus

WORDS **LIA LEENDERTZ** ILLUSTRATION **PETRA BÖRNER**

Sow sweet peas

Two years ago I had vast success with autumn-sown sweet peas. They were ready to plant out in spring and then romped up their poles, burst into flower some time in June and kept going until well into September. I picked repeated vase-fulls of long-stemmed blooms, and gave multiple bunches away as presents. They looked fabulously colourful clambering up their cane teepees in the middle of my allotment raised beds. So, naturally, last year I completely forgot to sow them in autumn and I had measly spring-sown specimens that only ever crept half-way up their poles and gave gaunt and short little flowers. Take this as a warning and get sowing now.

Christmas cacti

My mum has a Christmas cactus (*Schlumbergera*), which – despite an almost wilful neglect – is spectacularly in flower every Christmas. Her success it turns out is partially accidental: she keeps it in a spare room, which is often left unheated, and not used at night. Christmas cacti start to set buds from the moment night length is roughly equal to day length: the autumn equinox. They need cool temperatures – though not a touch of frost – and plenty of light in the day, but long, dark nights from now onwards. Even the brief switching on of a light will disturb the process, so pop yours in an unloved corner and forget about it (bar occasional watering, they are forest cacti not desert cacti) until Christmas.

Spike lawn

I garden on clay, and so gradually my lawn compacts into a solid, concrete-like path wherever it is frequently walked upon. Come winter rains this turns one particular part of the garden into a huge impassable puddle, as water struggles to escape. The shed is marooned. Spiking the lawn and then brushing in sand (pre-flood, this is) will give water somewhere to escape to and seems to ease the problem a little. This is a good moment to do all that, plus the scratching at the surface with a spring-tined rake that makes the lawn look awful now, but brilliant next summer. ☐

Things to do

Where leaves fall on soil, let them lie. They will partially rot and be pulled under by the worms. Gather up those fallen on lawns and plants and put them straight into borders.

Young hardy bananas should be wrapped in fleece or hessian. Older ones left unprotected will survive, but will be cut back to the ground by frost.

In windy areas cut back roses by a third to prevent wind rock.

Wrap outdoor taps in fleece or bubble wrap to prevent them freezing.

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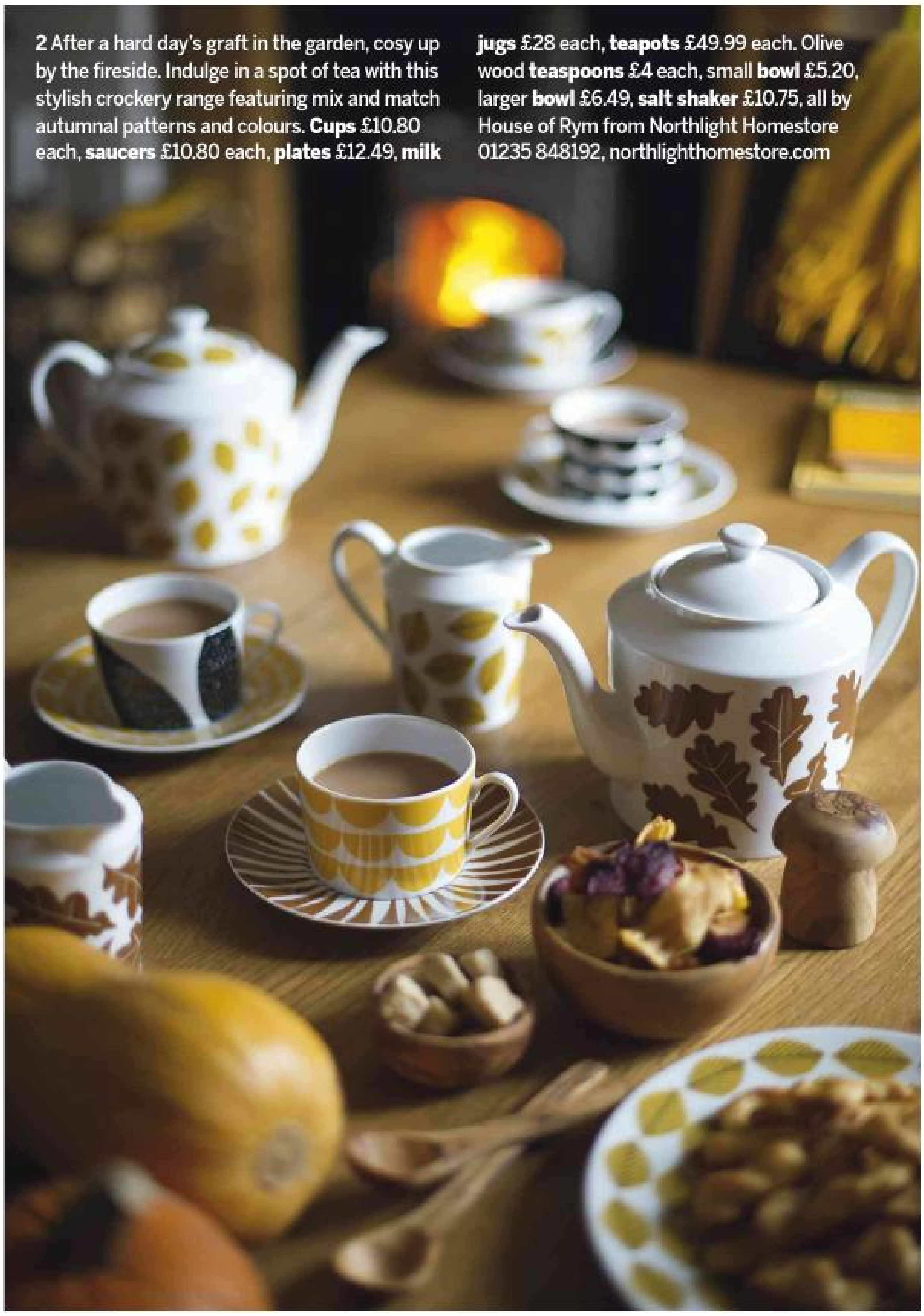
Falling into place

Autumn is the time for clearing leaves and staking young trees, then retreating to the fireside when the weather turns wet and windy

PHOTOGRAPHS **SEAN MALYON** STYLING **NIKI GOSS**

1 Start clearing up fallen leaves in the garden using this bamboo Japanese **hand rake** from the Great Dixter Shop 01797 254047, greatdixtershop.co.uk. Pile leaves into this biodegradable **leaf sack** and they'll rot down into rich, crumbly leaf mould to spread on the garden, £1.60 from Nigel's Eco Store 0800 288 8970, nigelsecostore.com



2 After a hard day's graft in the garden, cosy up by the fireside. Indulge in a spot of tea with this stylish crockery range featuring mix and match autumnal patterns and colours. **Cups** £10.80 each, **saucers** £10.80 each, **plates** £12.49, **milk jugs** £28 each, **teapots** £49.99 each. Olive wood **teaspoons** £4 each, small **bowl** £5.20, larger **bowl** £6.49, **salt shaker** £10.75, all by House of Rym from Northlight Homestore 01235 848192, northlighthomestore.com

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3 This hinged glass **frame** is perfect for displaying the beauty of pressed autumn leaves and flowers, £12.50 from Cox & Cox 0844 858 0744, coxandcox.co.uk

4 Use this 'Sugi Tape' **bark roll** for protecting tree trunks and branches when tying and training, £29 for 5m; for light pruning or deadheading try these Wakasaya **garden scissors** £25, both from Niwaki 0845 474 1041, niwaki.com. Water resistant 'Dry Touch' Gold Leaf **garden gloves**, £18.95 from The Worm That Turned 0844 573 8644, worm.co.uk

5 Store wood for the fire in this wire **log basket** £55, scented pine cone **firelighters** £16.50 for 12, all from Cox & Cox (see 3). Insulated 'Winter Touch' Gold Leaf **garden gloves**, £22.95 from The Worm That Turned (see 3). Eazitools yellow T-handle **muck-fork**, great for turning compost heaps and leaf piles, £19.99 from Living the Life of Riley 0330 333 4171, livingthelifeofriley.co.uk. Luxury alpaca **throw** by Elvang in 'bright sunshine', £170 from Northlight Homestore (see 2).

6 Silver leaf garland **fairy lights** with 30 LED lights on a 6m-long chain (indoor use only), £45 from Primrose & Plum 01428 643040, primroseandplum.co.uk

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GARDENS
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In brief

Name Lady Farm Gardens.

What Renowned for its prairie and steppe planting, providing year-round colour and interest.

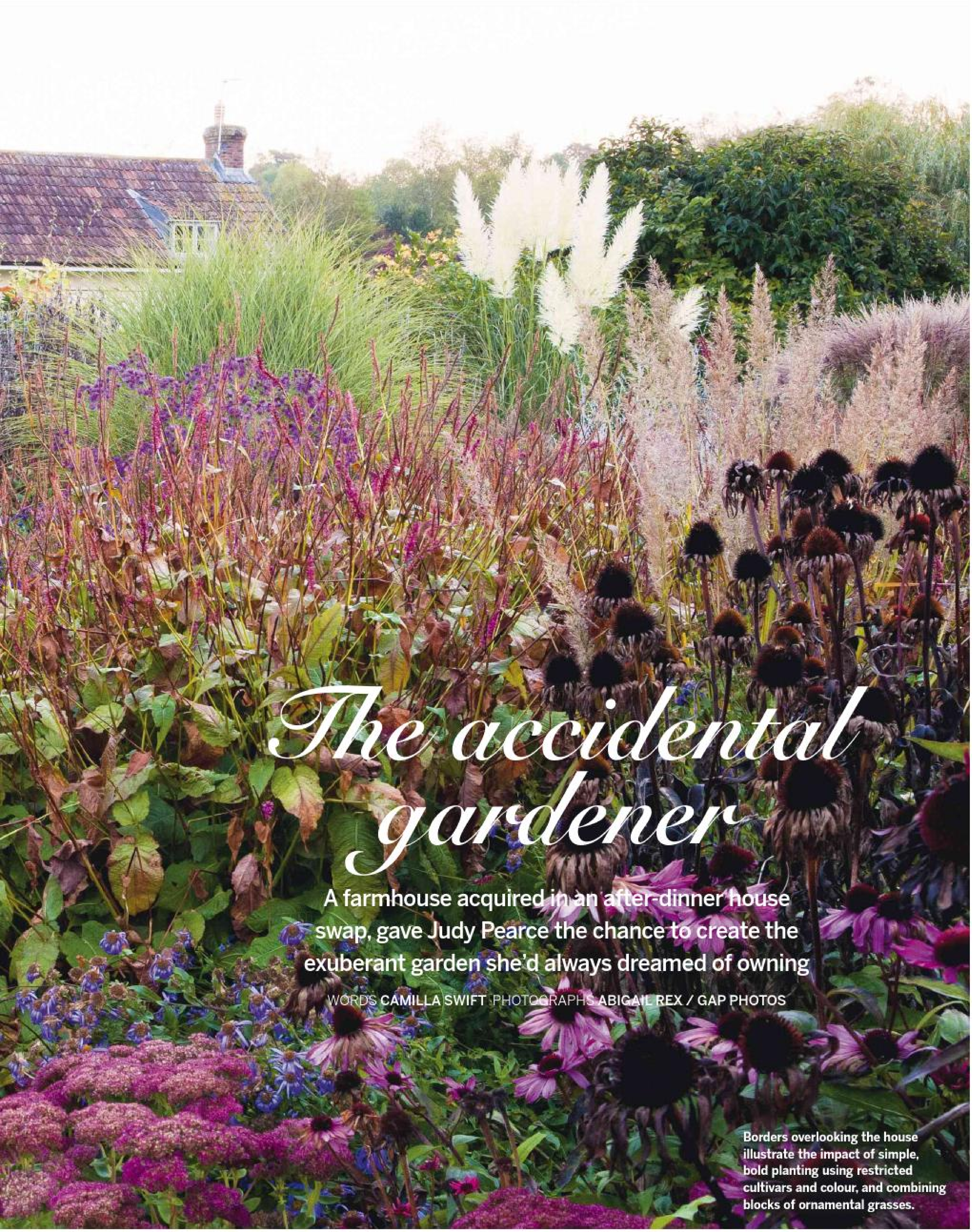
Where Chelwood, Somerset perched on the edge of the Chew Valley.

Size 12 acres on a sloping site.

Soil Red clay with good top soil, neutral, slightly acid.

Climate Extremes of weather; temperatures can be as low as -19°C and as hot as around 35°C in summer. Snow in January 2013.

Points of interest Walled garden, lake, stream through rockwork ravine, steppe and prairie planting.



The accidental gardener

A farmhouse acquired in an after-dinner house swap, gave Judy Pearce the chance to create the exuberant garden she'd always dreamed of owning

WORDS **CAMILLA SWIFT** PHOTOGRAPHS **ABIGAIL REX / GAP PHOTOS**

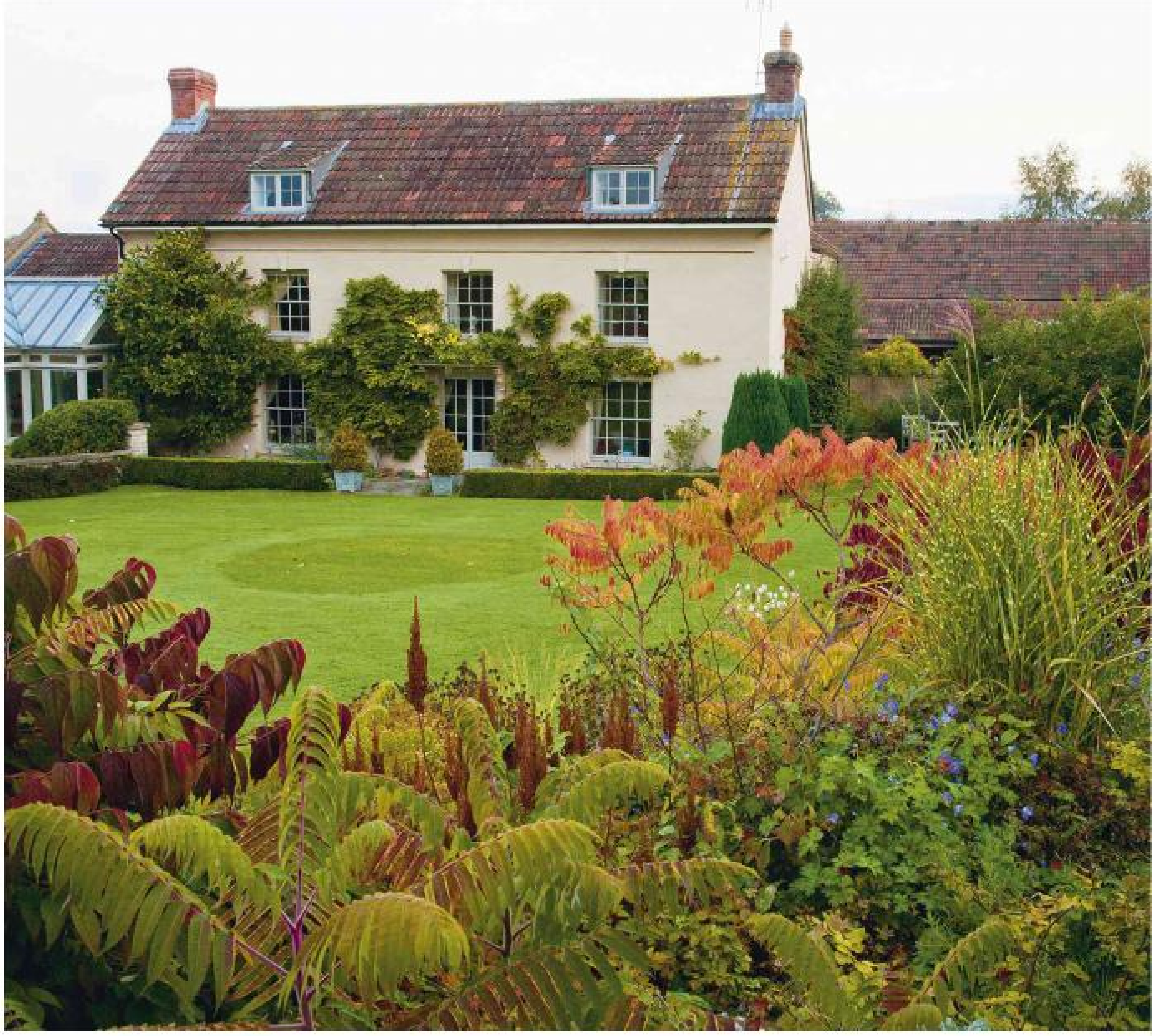
Borders overlooking the house illustrate the impact of simple, bold planting using restricted cultivars and colour, and combining blocks of ornamental grasses.

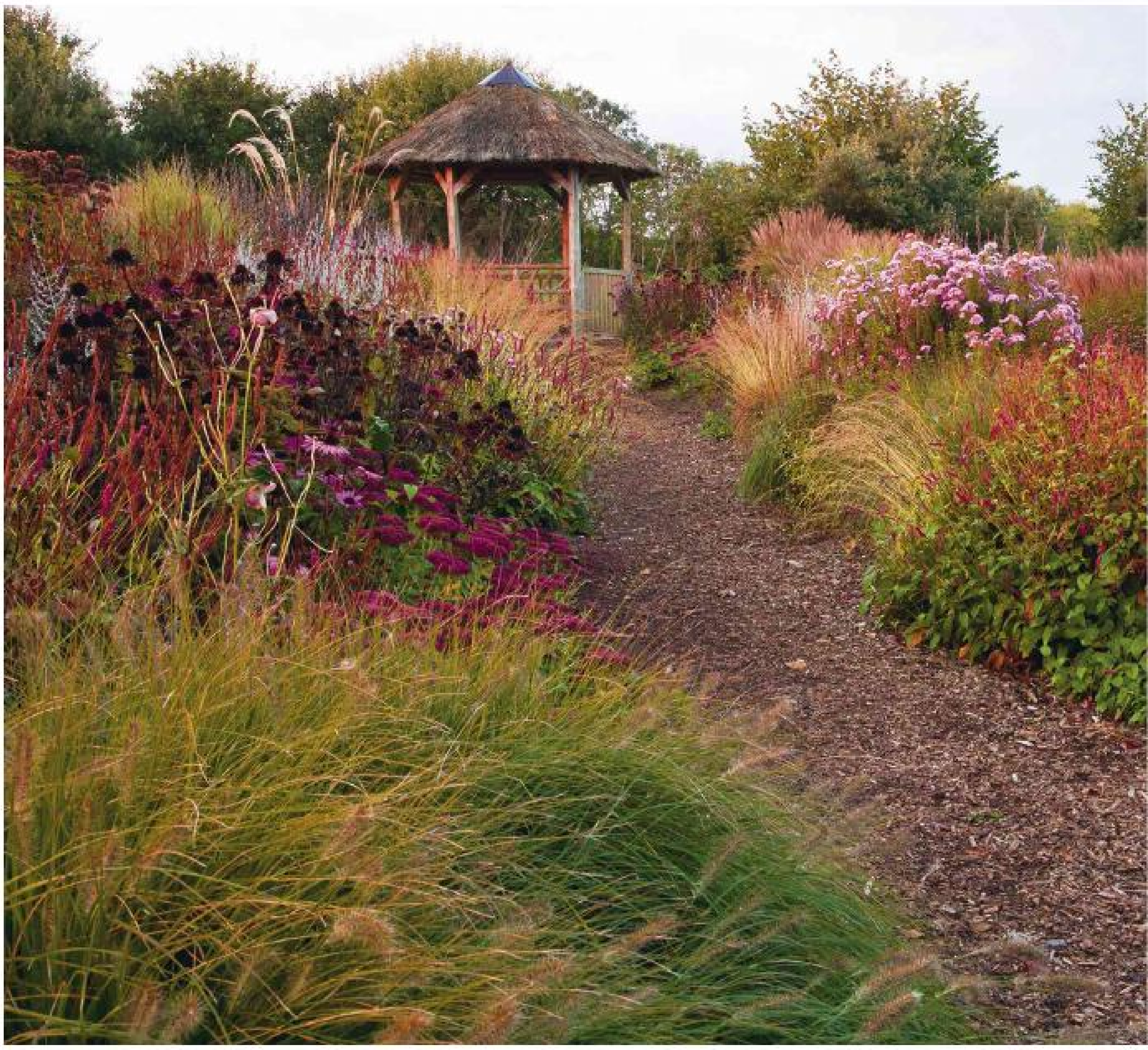
What began as a merry dinner with a prodigious quantity of cider, ended a few hours later with a house swap sealed with a handshake – and Judy Pearce the proud owner of a farmyard with 150 cows, many flies and a strong smell of silage. But no semblance of a garden. "There was nothing," says the redoubtable Judy, "no trees, no shrubs, just a bit of grass and lots of thistles."

Cue several men with diggers, who once they'd flattened all the farm buildings, spent a year digging up concrete before finally bringing in a neighbouring four-acre field of top soil, "which we pushed round to make shapes". Thirty years on there's a formal walled garden, a shady hosta walk, with birch and hydrangeas that leads to a lake, surrounded by natural planting and a wildflower meadow; a stream that cascades into a deep ravine of rockwork and stunning, ever-changing vistas over the valley. And sculpture too. Then on a rectangular slope enclosed by small trees and another stream, there's a spectacular rolling prospect of steppe and prairie planting; intricate interwoven swathes of colour and structure, vibrant drifts of architectural perennials and ornamental grasses that seemingly go on forever. This is why so many photographers and visitors alike flock to Lady Farm.

"I'm not a gardener," says Judy. "I've never been a gardener." She'd always wanted a garden but not a manicured little one with borders – she wanted big, bold, blowsy

Continued on page 36 ▷





Top left Robust shrubs, including *Viburnum plicatum* f. *tomentosum* 'Mariesii' with its purple-red autumn colour, are offset by the spent plumes of *Astilbe chinensis* var. *taquetii* 'Purpurlanze' and the long-flowering *Geranium* 'Johnson's Blue' to create a strong border in the formal garden around the house.

Top right A sloping topiary allée of yew buttresses, low box hedges and clipped standard spheres of *Ligustrum delavayanum*, lead to a beech hedge and out to the landscape beyond. *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Firetail' *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Morning Light', *Salvia* x *sylvestris* 'Blauhügel' and *Sedum* 'Matrona' line the path.

Bottom left Borders of *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Hameln' and *Molinia caerulea* 'Variegata', together with *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Firetail' and *P. amplexicaulis* 'Inverleith' threaten to invade an informal path leading to the summerhouse.

Bottom right Scarlet stems of *Cornus alba* 'Aurea' and sprays of *Cotoneaster horizontalis* bring colour to the soft greens of the lakeside planting.

5

Step by steppe planting

Judy's top tips for creating a steppe scheme. Although it's not an ideal plan for a small garden, there are ideas you can incorporate.

Don't be frightened of seizing big, bold planting opportunities. This is your chance to allow shrubs to grow to their full potential. If you want to have a stab in a small garden, start with smaller grasses in among your border perennials. Gertrude Jekyll did, after all.

Planting needs to be fairly tight. Judy allows five plants per square metre, in general, with the grasses a little more spread out except when they are really needed to support something floppy, such as *Perovskia*. Plants should be close enough together to look after each other, but not too close to suffocate.

Pennisetums flower better the more you split them. Judy covered her established beds in gravel. This makes them more difficult to weed but the plants self-seed more easily. She covers new borders in a thick layer of year-old woodchip mulch.

Right plant, right place. Always bear in mind your site, the prevailing soil and climatic conditions. Judy only uses hardy plants, substituting wherever necessary British equivalents for those used in German- and Dutch-designed prairie gardens.

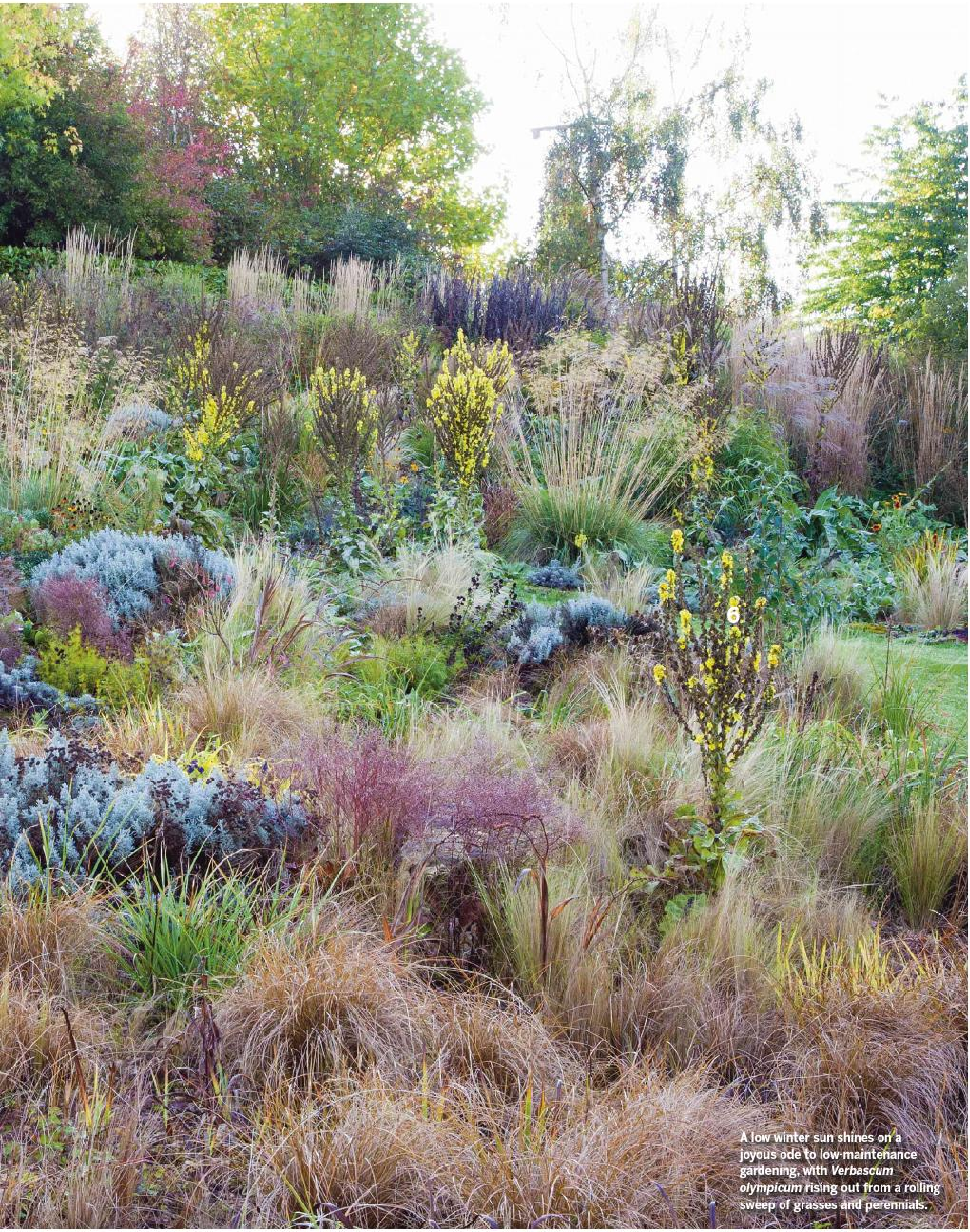
Once established, prairie planting is deliciously low maintenance. Judy has one full-time gardener and they weed twice a year, which takes them a week. Weeds are sparse apart from a bit of bindweed, but as Judy says you have to have something to complain about. Slugs really hate prairie planting.

***Aquilegia* and then *Lythrum salicaria* 'Feuerkerze'** will get borders up and running. From the end of May, beginning of June. The rest will follow right up until Christmas.

Positioning is important: when the tall *Echinops* are over, for example, Judy suggests having something really colourful ready in front to come later, such as a tall monarda or *Scutellaria incana*.

Once the perennials start to fade architectural interest emerges, think of winter seedheads and shapes: phlomis, thistle, verbascum and colourfully stemmed cornus.

Colours in prairie borders tend to fade and change rathen than disappear. Prairie planting schemes are often at their most beautiful in autumn and winter.



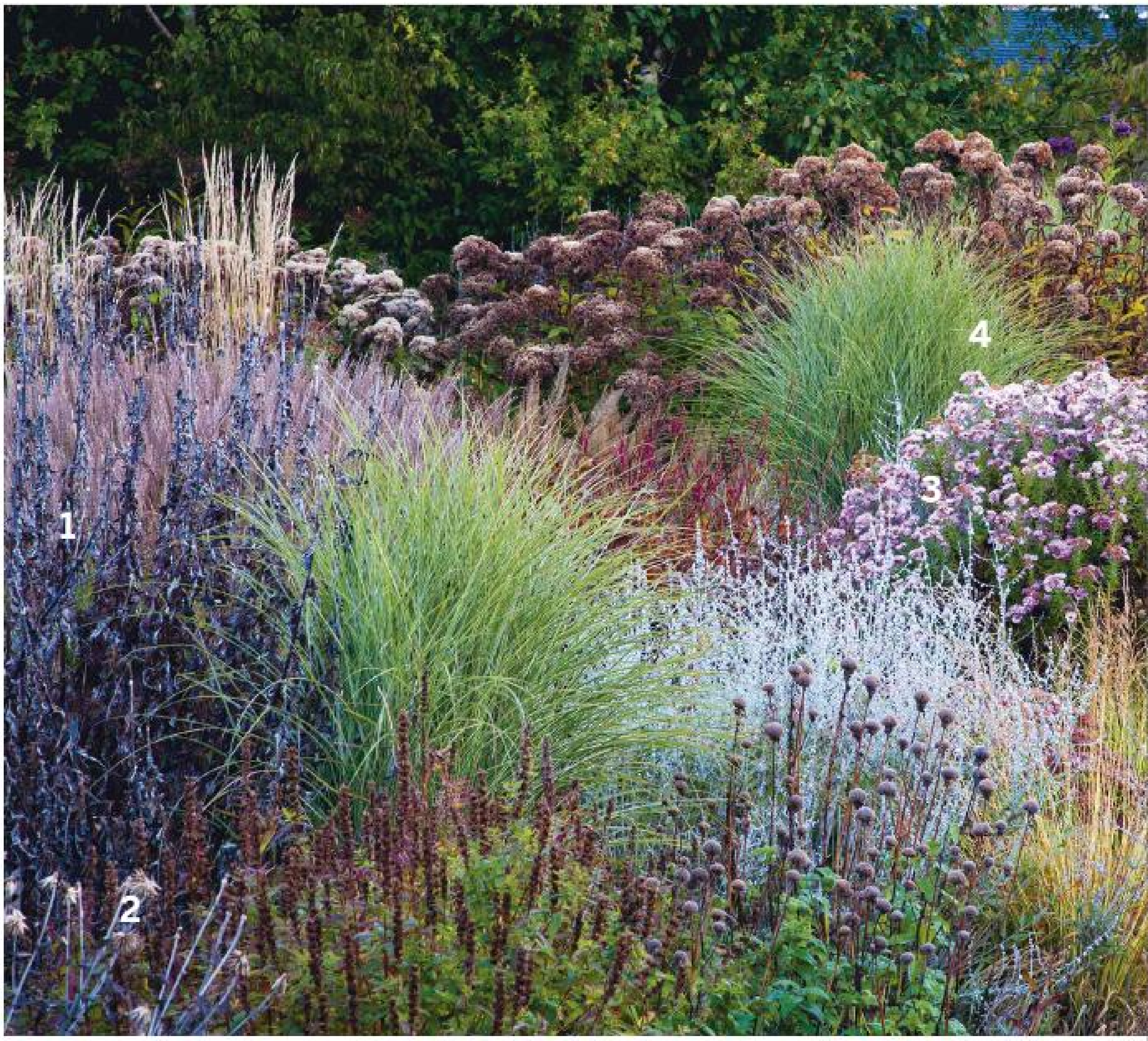
A low winter sun shines on a joyous ode to low-maintenance gardening, with *Verbascum olympicum* rising out from a rolling sweep of grasses and perennials.

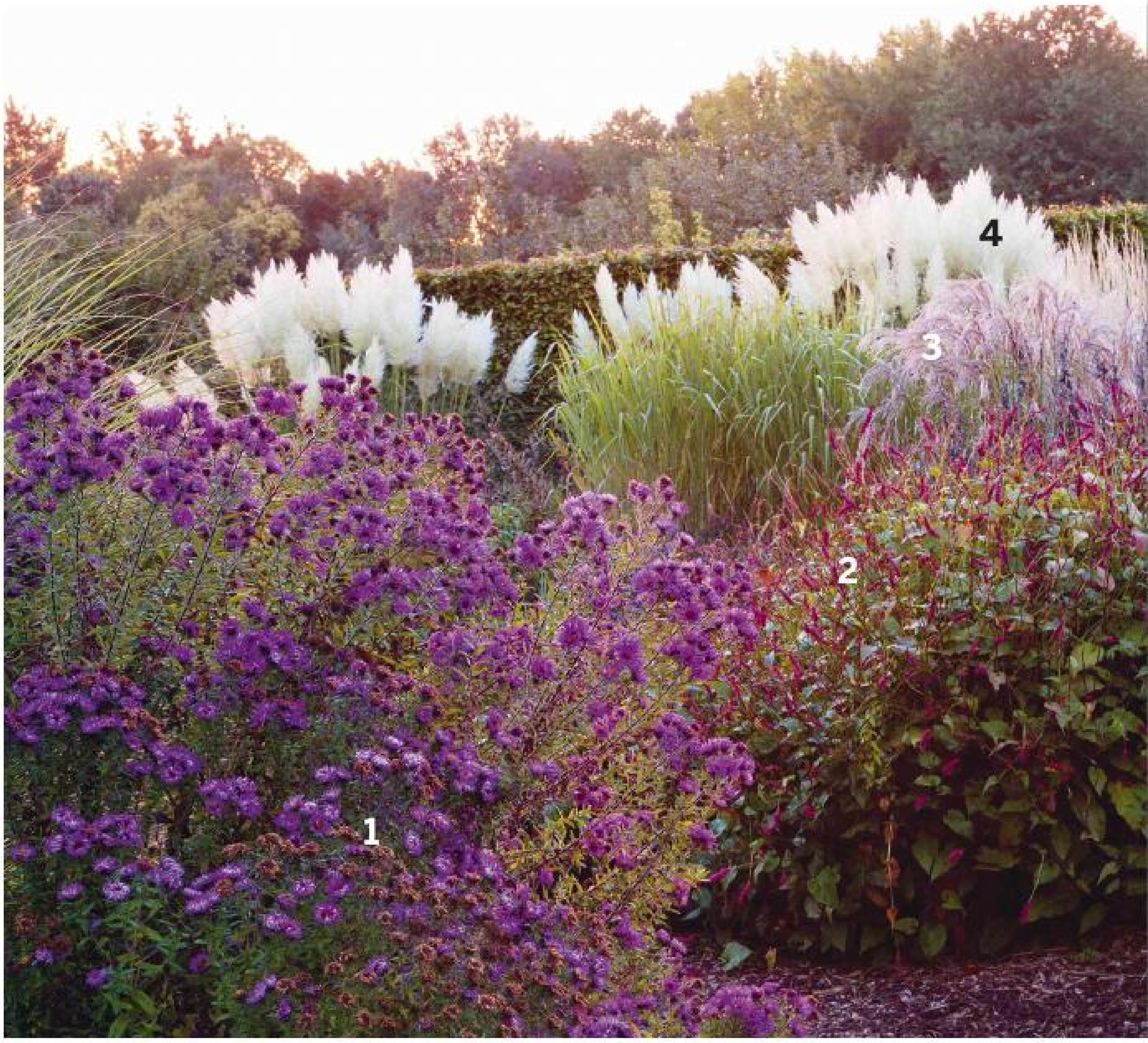
Sways of upstanding miscanthus and bold clumps of bright astor fill the prairie bed

▷ flamboyance. She also knew she didn't want endless hard work. "I don't dig, I hate getting my hands dirty. This was going to be a garden to enjoy, not weed." Music to all our ears.

"You get an idea and you go for it," says Judy. And she went for it. Guided initially by Peggy Curnow, a friend of her mother's who "had a really good eye for colour and form" – and with advice from designer John Brookes as well as Hilliers, who gave invaluable support with shrubs and trees – Judy went to a lecture at Wisley given by Nigel Dunnett, James Hitchmough and Noël Kingsbury on new perennial planting. She was hooked. "That's when I knew what I wanted to do."

Now sways of upstanding *Miscanthus*, wispy spires of *Veronica* and bold clumps of bright asters fill the prairie bed, while the steppe border, built on a hated tennis court (she never won), is more contained; things don't grow as quickly there but seed gently on their own. For colour among the grasses there are generous clusters of sedum, rudbeckia, the vivid blue *Scutellaria*, and the bright scarlet *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer' – Judy goes actively into mourning once ▷



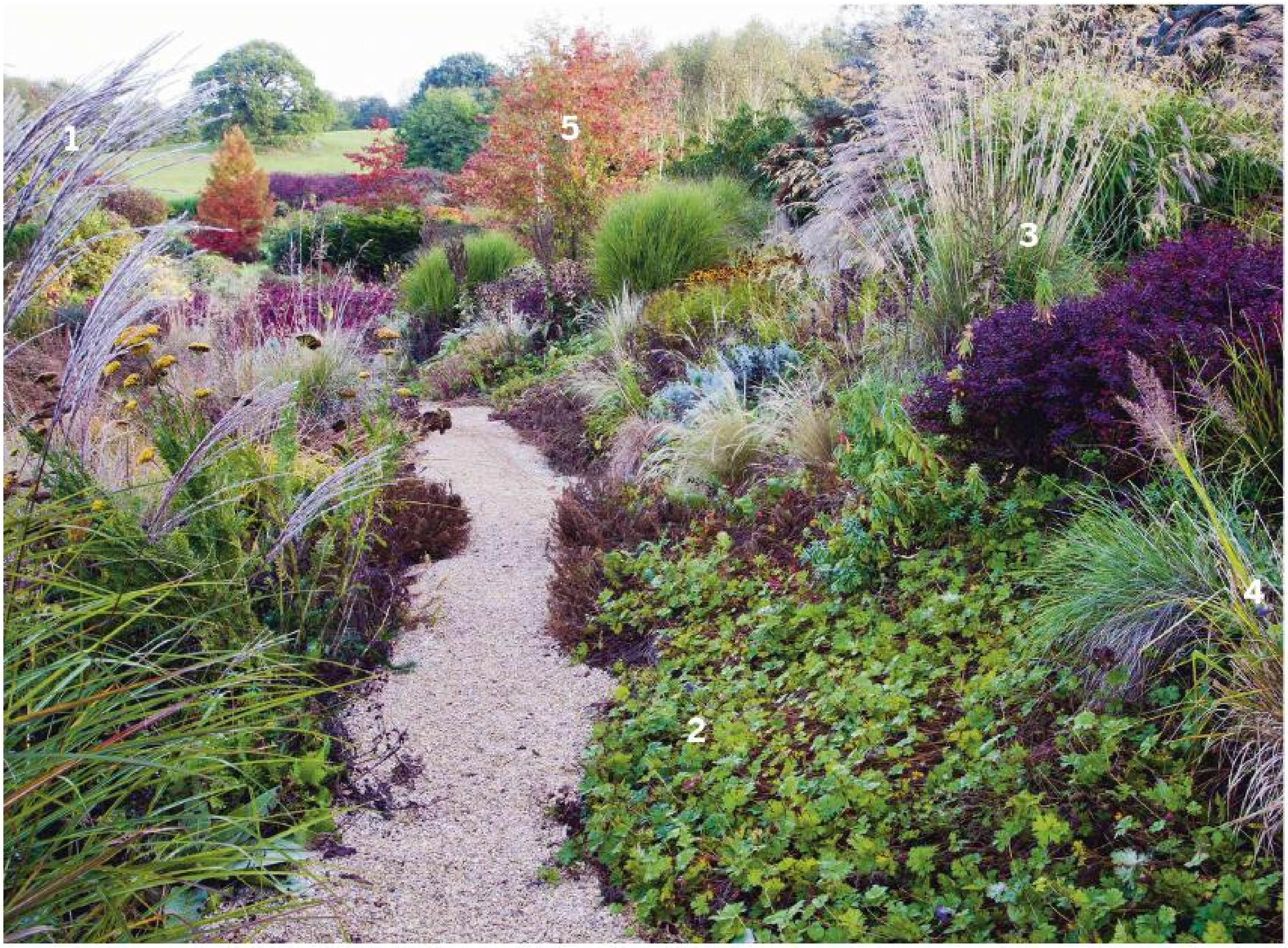


Top left In two large borders near the house, Judy has opted for grasses, stems and colour-themed perennials. Here lilacs and purples, including *Scutellaria incana* **(1)**, *Echinacea purpurea* 'Rubinstern' **(2)** and *Aster novae-angliae* 'Harrington's Pink' **(3)** blend with the green of grasses, including *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Morning Light' **(4).**

Top right A more muted palette here with *Miscanthus transmorrisonensis* **(1)**, *Geranium* 'Johnson's Blue' **(2)**, *Stipa gigantea* **(3)** and *Panicum virgatum* 'Dallas Blues' **(4)**, leads to an eyecatching *Parrotia persica* **(5)** and on to the landscape beyond.

Bottom left A mix of vibrant purple *Aster novae-angliae* 'Andenken an Alma Pötschke' **(1)** and hot red *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Atrosanguinea' **(2)** contrast well with the pale pink of *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Malepartus' **(3)** and the fluffy white plumes of *Cortaderia selloana* 'Pumila' **(4)**.

Bottom right The warm pink of *Sedum* 'Herbstfreude' **(1)** draws the eye to the subtler hues of *Lythrum salicaria* 'Feuerkerze' **(2)** *Eupatorium maculatum* Atropurpureum Group **(3)** and *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Hameln' **(4)**.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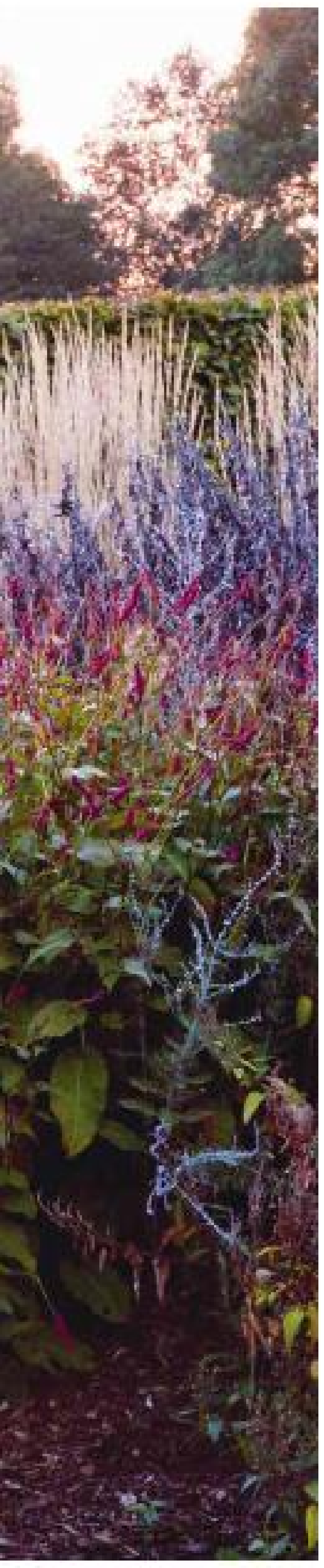

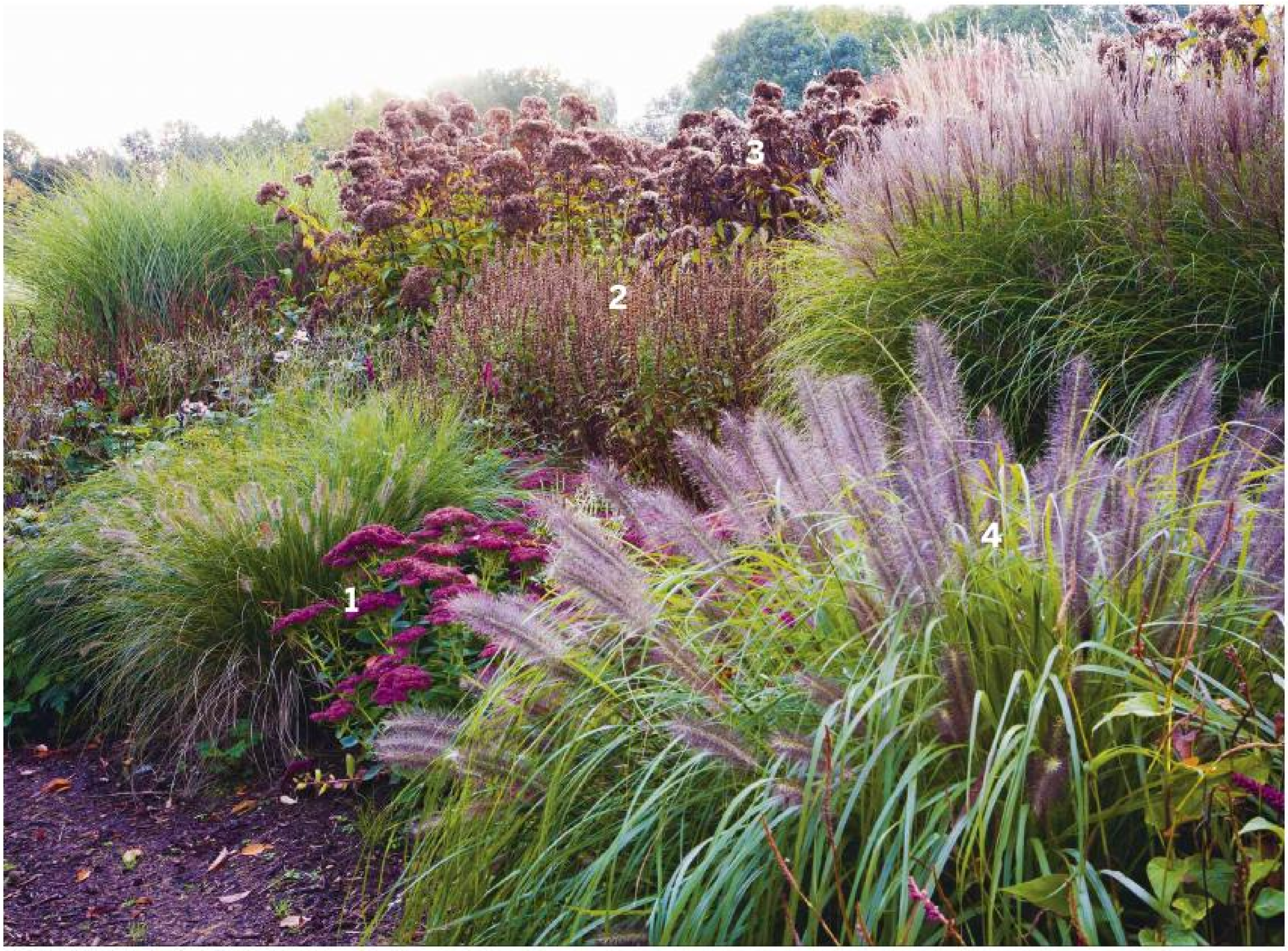
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Close to the house Judy has created a more formal garden.

For someone who doesn't do gardening and hates getting her hands dirty, Judy has created a remarkable garden

▷ it's over. "What I really love about steppe planting is you keep looking, and you always see something different," she says.

In 2007 Judy created two massive new borders above the house: 2,500 plants, tightly packed, and covered with a generous bark mulch to suppress the weeds. Having admired Piet Oudolf's borders at RHS Garden Wisley she decided she wanted something more rustic. "I didn't want it too controlled, so it isn't; it self seeds as it likes," she says.

Great clumps of *Cortaderia* stand to attention, waving their plumes in the air like a conference of housemaids. "On the whole *Stipa* stays at the top, *Carex* at the bottom," she explains. "But they all travel a bit and occasionally jump across the path. *Eryngium giganteum* Miss Willmott's ghost is sound if a little excitable and the *Euphorbia cyparissias* is rampant and has to be pulled out in handfuls every spring."

Now in November the effect is still breathtaking. With much else spent and dying, the grasses keep moving, the structure of the planting slowly emerges. Spider webs and the hoar frost make wonderful architectural shapes everywhere while brightly coloured perennials fade to the muted shades of an elegant autumnal Harris tweed.

For someone who doesn't do gardening and hates getting her hands dirty, Judy has created a remarkable garden at Lady Farm. Is she happy with it now? "For me this garden is all about family, history, fun, what gives you pleasure, what you enjoy," she says.

"When I started it wasn't obvious what I was trying to do, least of all to me. But now it is. It's helped that I never cared what other people think, I just decided I was going to do what I liked. I don't know what I'd do instead, and anyway Malcolm would go mad. An obliging husband is the secret to every woman gardener's success and Malcolm has been very obliging." He's needed to be. "Compromise only works if it goes entirely your way," she says. And for the future? "I've just got to get it a bit better," says Judy, uncompromisingly. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Lady Farm, Chelwood, Somerset BS39 4NN.

Tel 01761 49077 **Website** ladyfarm.com

Open 2-5pm four Sundays each year, or by appointment. Lady Farm is also hosting a Rare Plant Fair on 24 August 2014.

READER TOUR

Lady Farm is one of the gardens we'll be visiting on the five-day GARDENS ILLUSTRATED reader tour of Somerset gardens in June 2014. See page 8 for more details.

9 key autumn plants chosen by Judy

1 *Viburnum plicatum* f. *tomentosum* 'Mariesii'
White flowers in spring, lovely layered form, miraculous early autumn colour. Grows to 3m. AGM*. USDA 5b-9a†

2 *Euonymus alatus*
Glorious shrub for vibrant autumn colour. Turns stunning shades of bright, scarlet red from the end of August. 1.5-2.5m. RHS H4†, USDA 4a-8b.

3 *Calamagrostis brachytricha*
Tall, fluffy flower heads, silvery grey with pinkish-purple tints. Creates a gently arching fountain of grey-green foliage that turns the colour of butter in autumn. 1-1.5m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

4 *Cortaderia richardii*
Also known as the toetoe grass, this slender pampas has spectacular plume-like flowerheads in June. 2.5-4m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 6a.

5 *Miscanthus transmorrisonensis*
Rampant if charming thug with flowerheads like a jazz drummer's brush. 1-2m. USDA 5a-9b.

6 *Perovskia atriplicifolia*
Aromatic leaves and upright spikes of violet-blue flowers from August onwards. Wonderful companion for late-summer ornamental grasses and perennials. 60-90cm. USDA 4a-9b.

7 *Cornus alba* 'Aurea'
Golden-yellow leaves, which intensify in autumn then fall to reveal stunning red stems. 1.5-2.5m. AGM. RHS H7.

8 *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Hameln'
Deciduous grass forming a compact, low mound that produces long-lasting, soft, pinkish, bottle-brush-like flowers in late summer. 50cm-1m. RHS H3-H4.

9 *Scutellaria incana*
Also known as 'upside down Salvia'. Flowers throughout summer into autumn with square stems each bearing clusters of violet-blue and white flowers. A magnet for bees and butterflies. 60-90cm. USDA 4a-9b.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

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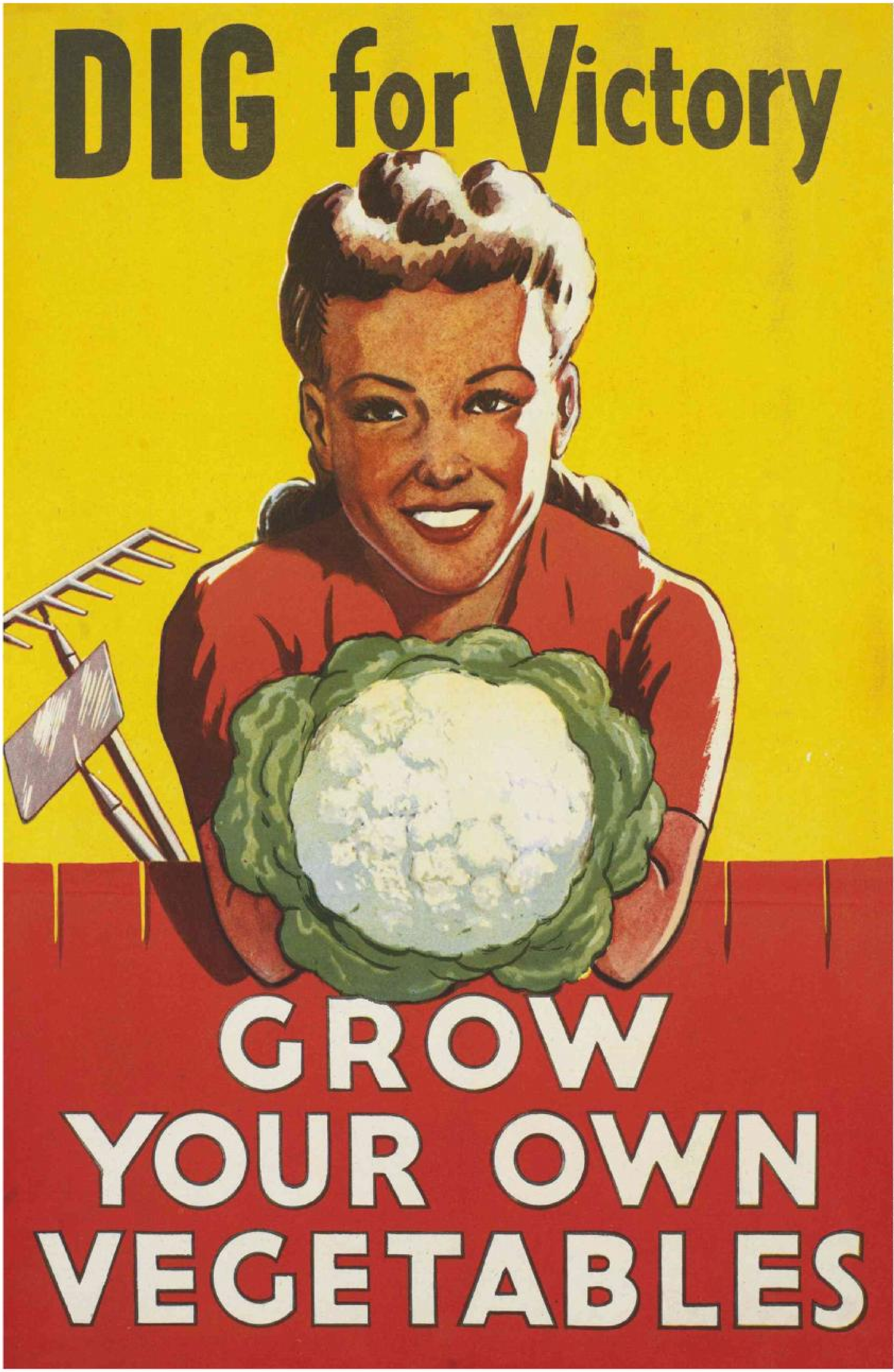
6 ELKE BORKOWSKI, 7 MATT ANKER, 9 FHF GREENMEDIA, ALL GAPPHOTOS

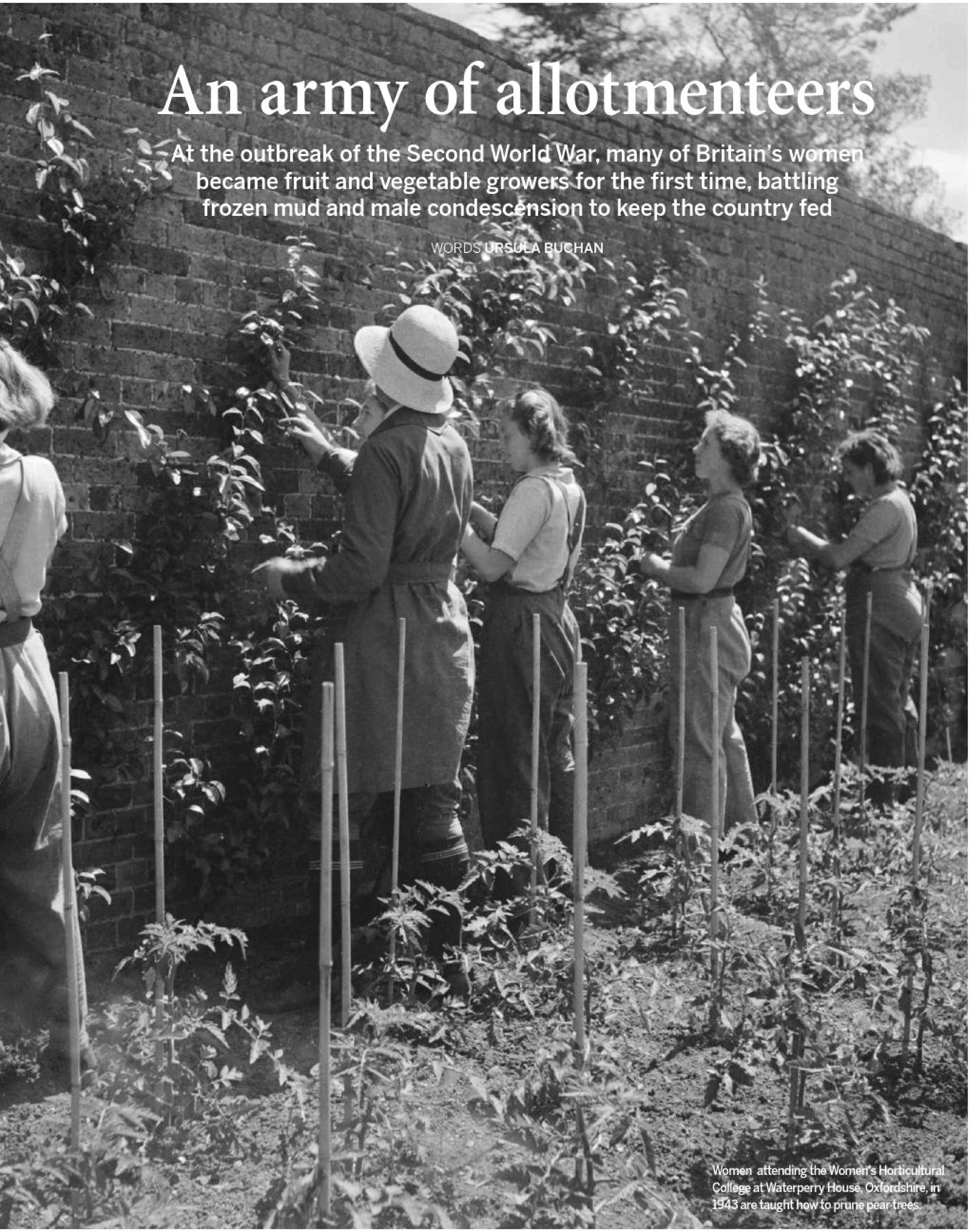

DIG for Victory
GROW
YOUR OWN
VEGETABLES

ADRIAN MUTTITT / ALAMY, IWM/GETTY IMAGES

An army of allotmenteers

At the outbreak of the Second World War, many of Britain's women became fruit and vegetable growers for the first time, battling frozen mud and male condescension to keep the country fed

WORDS **URSULA BUCHAN**



Women attending the Women's Horticultural College at Waterperry House, Oxfordshire, in 1943 are taught how to prune pear trees.

Five women who made a difference

Many women found ways, both big and small, to contribute to the war effort

1 THE WEALTHY PHILANTHROPIST
The impact made by Lady (Trudie) Denman, cannot be overstated. Not only was she President of the National Federation of Women's Institutes in wartime, but she was also head of the Women's Land Army (WLA). A wealthy, public-spirited and philanthropic woman, she ran the WLA from her home in Sussex. She was noted for her tact, acumen and organisational genius. She resigned at the end of the war in protest at the lack of official recognition by government of the contribution of the Women's Land Army.

2 THE HORTICULTURIST
Elizabeth Hess was the Agricultural Organiser of the National Federation of Women's Institutes, employed to teach its members how to grow vegetables and fruit. She demonstrated how to dig and store vegetables in 'clamps' in winter, prune fruit trees and kill vegetable pests with derris powder. 'I got hold of a new handgun duster. You could see insects dying in front of your eyes.' She became Principal of Studley College in 1956.

3 THE LAND GIRL
Beryl Robe went to work at a 100-acre market garden in Surrey, living in a Land Army hostel with 20 other girls. Lettuces were an important crop. 'I remember very long, hot summer days spent cutting many hundreds, going down lines of lettuce feeling each heart with the back of my knuckles to make sure it was firm enough and ready to be cut for market.'

4 THE HOUSEWIFE
Clara Milburn was a housewife who grew vegetables, fruit and flowers (and kept hens), partly as a coping mechanism while her only child, Alan, was a prisoner of war in Germany. When Clara's nephew was badly injured, and his wife killed, in a bombing raid, she wrote in her diary: 'All the afternoon I worked in the garden, sowing seeds and digging – one just had to be doing.' Her son survived the war, and they were reunited in May 1945.

5 THE GARDENING APPRENTICE
Muriel Green trained on an apprenticeship scheme run by the Women's Farm and Garden Association. She saw kitchen gardening as a better option than other war work even if it meant scrubbing down greenhouses or picking Brussels sprouts in frosty weather. 'It is true our uniform is not shattering... and we face the elements more but I think we get more admiration and are just as useful to the war effort.'

Most heroic were five women of the Hawkinge WI, who continued stirring jam, even while the Battle of Britain raged over their heads

In 1939, at the outbreak of war, an astonishing two-thirds of Britain's food was imported. Agriculture and commercial horticulture had been in steep decline in the 1930s and great tracts of land were not cultivated at all. Before the war, Britain scarcely grew anything that couldn't be grown cheaper elsewhere; even onions and carrots mostly came from the Netherlands and Germany. The German submarine threat, which in the latter days of the First World War had almost succeeded in bringing Britain to its knees, would ensure that foreign imports were severely limited. Inevitably, rationing of basic foods was introduced in January 1940. What is more, a substantial minority of the 45 million population was undernourished even before war broke out, thanks at least partly to the Depression. So it was no wonder that the government, from the very start, was keen to encourage farmers to increase productivity and gardeners to grow their own vegetables.

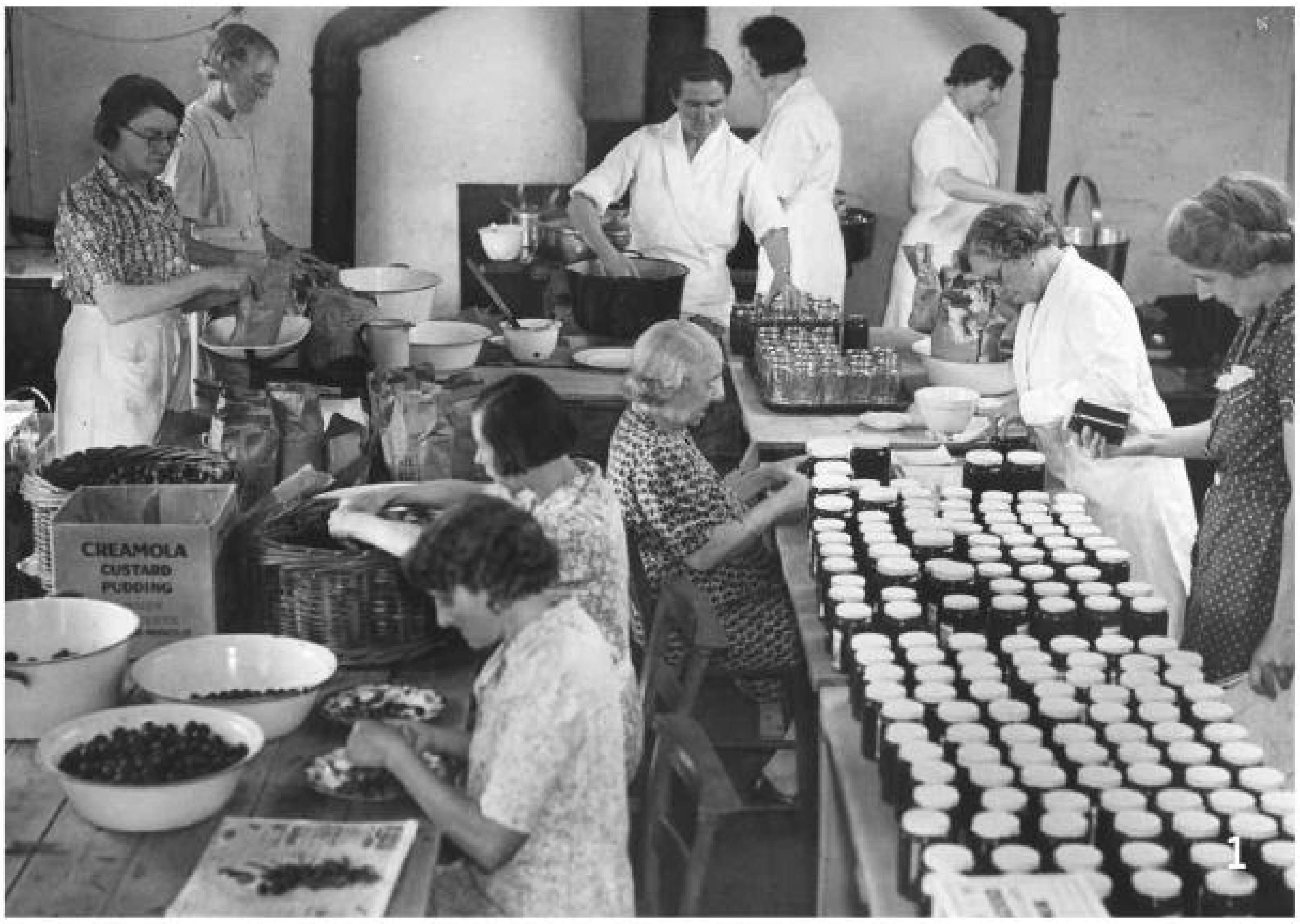
Before the war, allotment gardening had been seen as an almost exclusively male preoccupation, but young men were soon conscripted into the armed services, so wartime vegetable gardening became the province of retired men, women and public-spirited school children.

The government knew that it would have to conduct a concerted publicity campaign – what came to be known as 'Dig for Victory' – to encourage civilians to rent allotments or turn their lawns and flower borders over to vegetables. The government also thought, with justification, that the thousands of new gardeners, or 'Victory Diggers', would have to be taught all the basics. Hence the stream of excellent, if rather dour, pamphlets, together with instructional films, which issued from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF); these explained how to double-dig, make a compost heap, draw out a seed drill, kill pests and cure diseases. Many of the instructions would not look out of place in a modern practical gardening book – except that we don't go on about digging all the time any more. Indeed, if 'no-dig' methods had been more widely understood by the outbreak of war – and there had been enough farmyard manure available – a lot of women would have been spared many back-breaking, blister-inducing, miserable hours of winter digging.

MAF put particular emphasis on its cropping plan, to make the best use of the space available in amateur gardens and allotments. It managed to persuade the garden-minded King and Queen to allow the two teenage princesses to be photographed gardening at Windsor Castle. In what must rank as one of the most eccentric publicity shots of the whole war, the current Queen and the late Princess Margaret are shown, dressed unsuitably but identically in summer dresses with Peter Pan collars, puzzling over MAF's cropping plan.

Initially, women were timid about getting involved in kitchen gardening, particularly because many feared the mistrust and mockery of experienced (male) allotmenteers. Some 10,000 allotments were rented in female names, and a few women's allotment associations were founded, but most women found it easier to grow vegetables in gardens, if they had them. There was greatest enthusiasm in 1940 and 1941; by 1943 there was such a shortage of labour in the factories that most women between the ages of 18 and 51 were doing at least part-time war work, so their contributions to the Dig for Victory campaign markedly declined.

More important to the nation was the contribution made to market gardening ▷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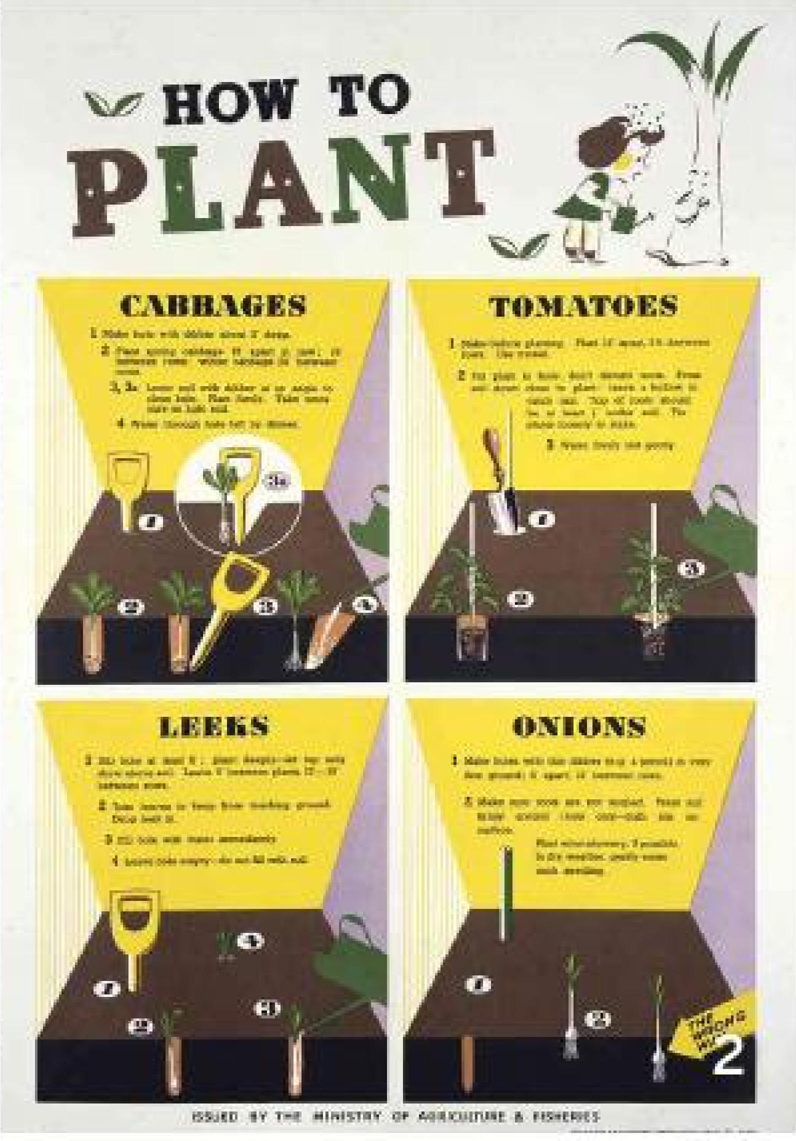
HOW TO
PLANT
CABBAGES
TOMATOES
LEEKS
ONIONS
THE WRONG WAY
ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES

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1 Members of the Mereworth Women's Institute in Kent make jam in August 1943.

2 The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries issued a series of useful pamphlets to help inexperienced gardeners get to grips with growing vegetables.

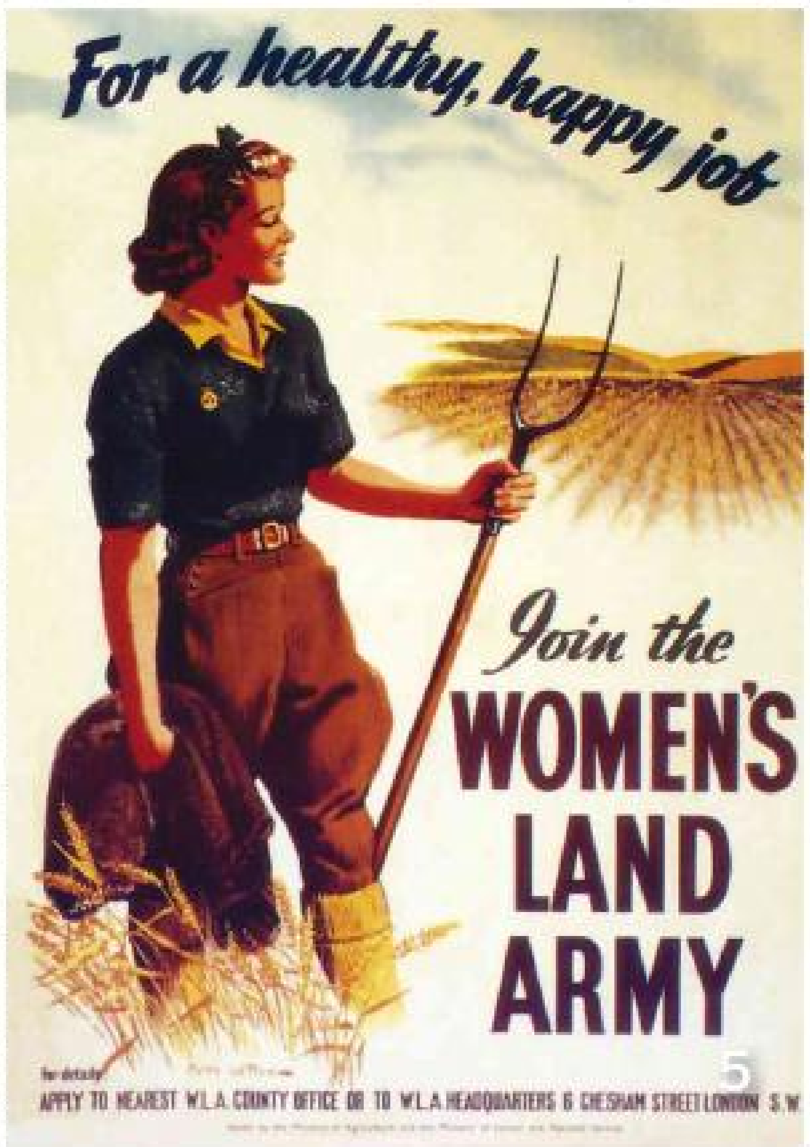
3 Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret study the government's cropping plan in the kitchen garden of Windsor Castle in 1943.

4 Women were encouraged to take over men's allotments and turn lawns and flower borders over to vegetable gardens.

5 A recruitment poster for the Women's Land Army. First established in 1915, it was refounded in June 1939 to help increase food production in expectation of war.

6 Rose hips being milled and processed to make rose hip syrup, a substitute source of vitamin C in place of imported citrus fruits.

4


For a healthy, happy job
Join the
WOMEN'S
LAND
ARMY
for details
APPLY TO NEAREST W.L.A. COUNTY OFFICE OR TO W.L.A. HEADQUARTERS 6 CHESHAM STREET LONDON S.W.

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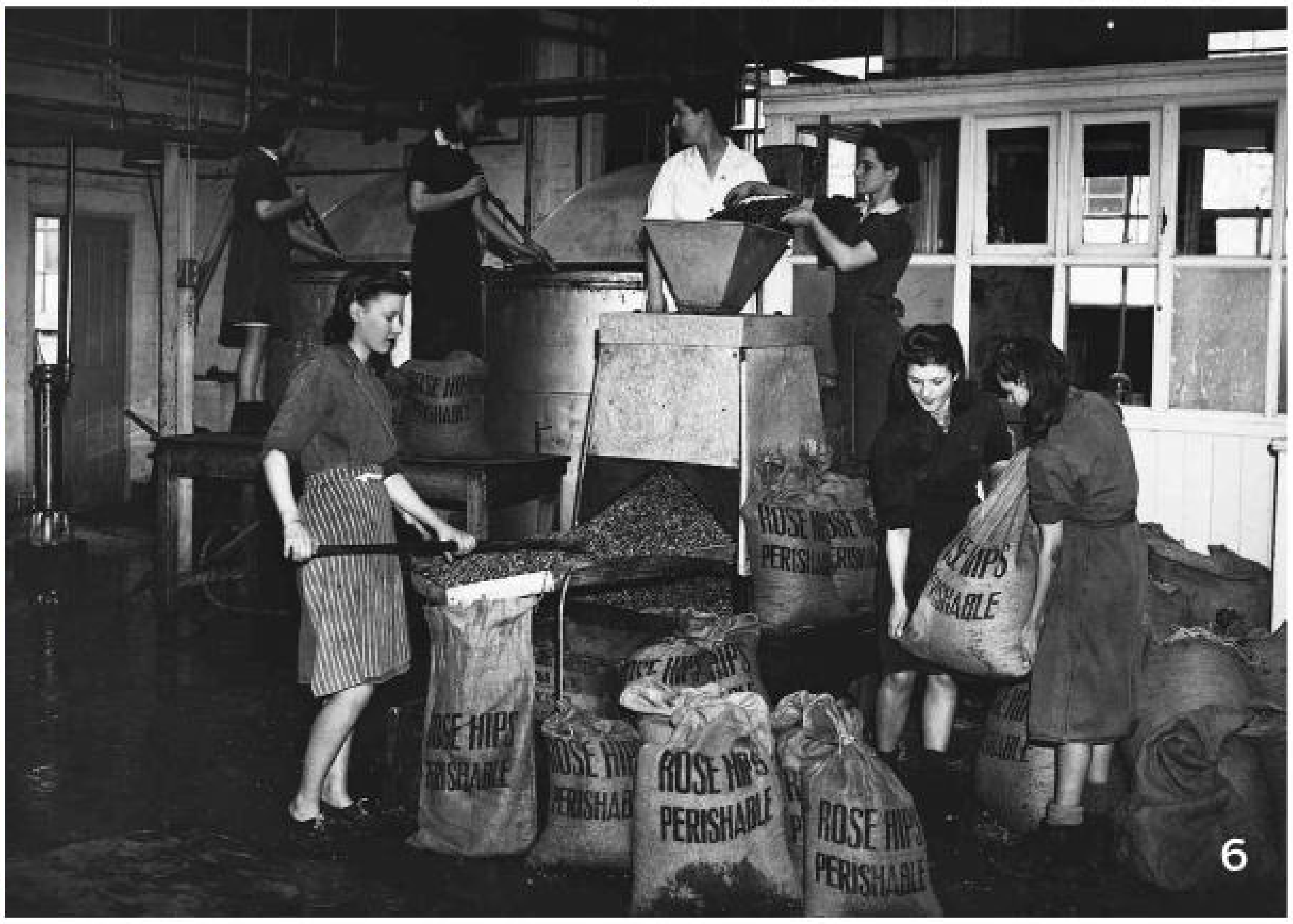

ROSE HIPS
PERISHABLE

6

1,3,&4 GETTY IMAGES, 2 HERITAGE IMAGES / CORBIS, 5 STEVE ALLEN - RETRO IMAGES / ALAMY, 6 HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION / CORBIS

Gardener Phyllis Cornwell (far left) offers advice on growing food at a demonstration allotment at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in May 1942.

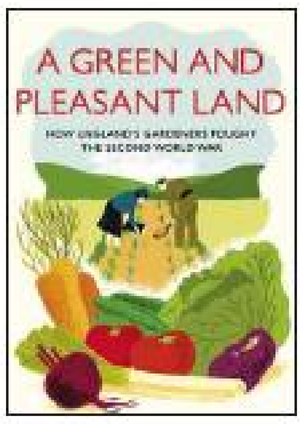
▷ and country house food production by 11,000 members of the Women's Land Army (WLA), many drawn from towns and cities. These girls wore a distinctive uniform of fawn breeches or dungarees, fawn shirt, green tie, green V-neck jersey, Wellington boots, slouch hat and armband. They grew glasshouse and outdoor tomatoes as well as leafy green vegetables to bridge the 'hungry gap' in winter. Their work was hard and often lonely; the luckiest were those who worked together in large market gardens and lived in hostels.

At the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, women gardeners mainly replaced men, a state of affairs not seen since the First World War. The Kew Guild Bulletin announced in 1939 'that women were now employed in the Propagating Pits, Decorative Department, Flower and Rock Gardens, and in certain sections of the Tropical Department, where they can apply their own particular experience, and by endeavouring to set up a high standard of work, disprove the saying for all time that *Nepeta mussinii* [now *N. racemosa*] is the only plant a woman can't kill'. In fact, women grew hundreds of tons of vegetables and fruit, often in the old flower borders, and helped with vital research work as well.

One of the most important areas of research at Kew concerned *Rosa canina* hips, common in every hedgerow in autumn, which turned out to be particularly high in vitamin C, when made into a palatable syrup. This form of vitamin C was especially important for infants and small children. The hips were collected by Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, schoolchildren and members of the Women's Institute; they continued this important task well into the post-war years.

However, the WI is probably best remembered for making jam, so as not to waste the great glut of plums in country gardens in 1940. They did this with great organisational skills, determination and even courage. Most heroic were the five women of Hawkinge in Kent, who continued stirring jam, even while the Battle of Britain raged over their heads. The efforts of the WIs may have been largely symbolic – the vast quantity of jam was made in factories – but theirs was a morale-raising story that hit the headlines at the time and is still remembered.

Wartime activities had a very beneficial effect on WI numbers, which peaked in 1954. But for professional women gardeners and Land Girls the post-war world was less bright. By 1946 there were only six girls left at Kew, and the Land Army was disbanded in 1950. On the whole, women lost their horticultural jobs to men returning from the war, and many of the gains in emancipation disappeared in the austere, inward-looking, post-war years. Another generation would pass before women were accorded equal status in this once all-male profession. □


A GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND
HOW ENGLAND'S GARDENERS FOUGHT THE SECOND WORLD WAR

BOOK OFFER
A Green and Pleasant Land: How England's Gardeners Fought the Second World War by Ursula Buchan (Hutchinson, £20), is available to GI readers for £18, including p&p. See page 103 for details.

Gardeners at war

Many men had to leave beloved gardens behind to fight for king and country

At the outbreak of war, most country gardens, nurseries and market gardens switched to 'food production', especially of tomatoes, onions, carrots and brassicas. Their gardeners were also conscripted into the Services, including Harry Dodson, who later achieved fame as the 'Victorian kitchen gardener' in the 1987 BBC television series. He was soon invalided out and grew vegetables and flowers at a shore naval station called HMS *Vernon*, and later at a country house that had been requisitioned for food production.

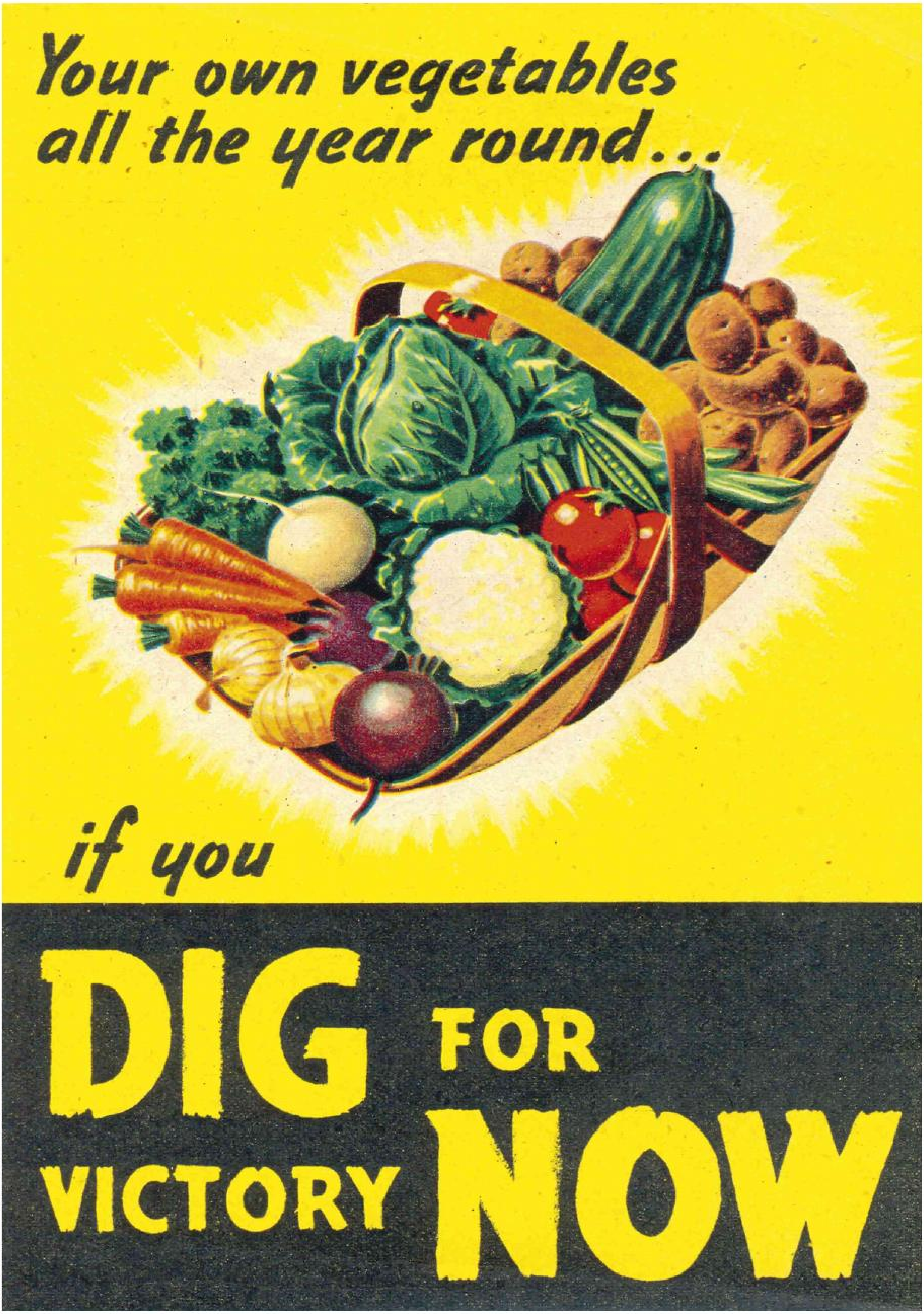
Captain WE Johns, the author of the 'Biggles' stories, described in touching terms saying goodbye to his gardener, off to war. 'Poor George. He doesn't even know what it's all about. He never will know, not even if he survives, for there is no hate in his heart… The fate of kings, of nations or empires means less to him than the well-being of his cabbages.'

Rooting for veg

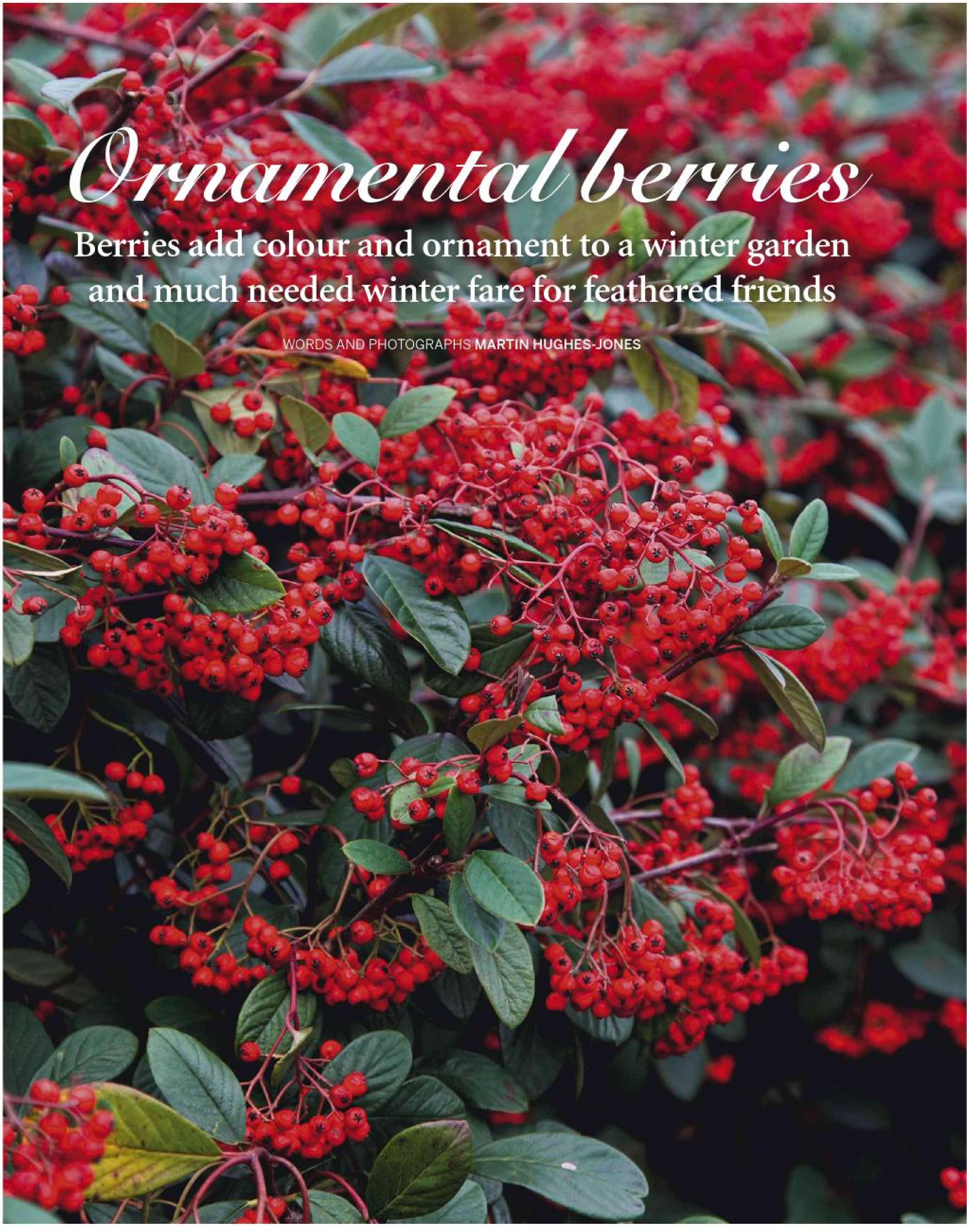
The government advised on the best fruit and veg for first-time gardeners

The difficulties of importing food, because of enemy attacks on the high seas, ensured many fruits became either scarce or unobtainable. The lack of vitamin C-rich fruits meant that brassicas became vital as substitutes, especially for the winter months – even though no one much enjoyed growing them (the task of picking caterpillars off cabbage leaves usually fell to children). Gardeners were also encouraged to grow carrots; these were prized for their vitamin A as well as natural sweetness, which meant that they could be used as a substitute for severely rationed sugar in many recipes. Many of the vegetables suggested in government leaflets – 'Onward' peas, 'Musselburgh' leeks – are still available today.

Tree fruits, such as apples and pears, were discouraged – it was thought that they'd take too long to bear fruit – in favour of soft fruits like gooseberries. Some wartime cultivars, such as 'Careless' and 'Leveller', are still widely grown.


Your own vegetables all the year round...
if you
DIG FOR VICTORY NOW

FACING PAGE: GETTY IMAGES. THIS PAGE: AMORET TANNER / ALAMY



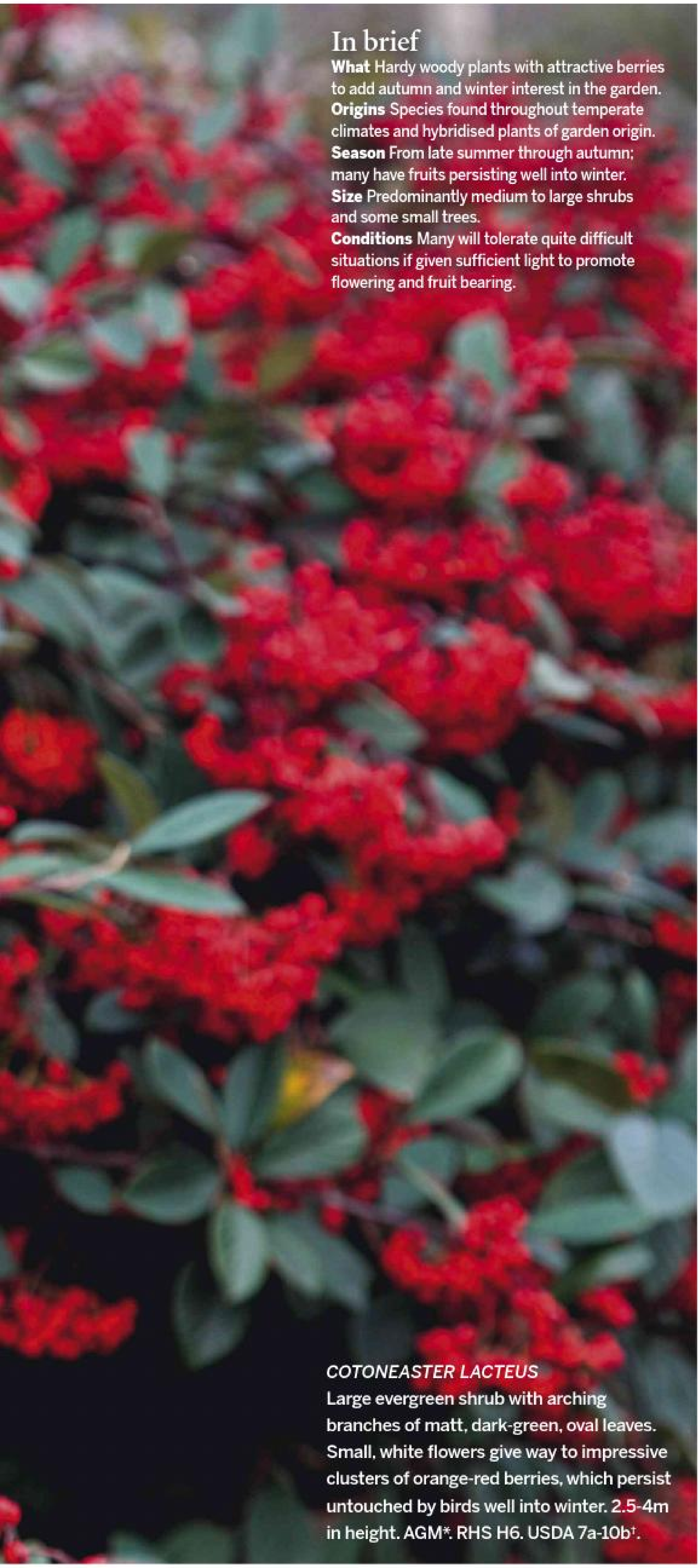
Ornamental berries

Berries add colour and ornament to a winter garden and much needed winter fare for feathered friends

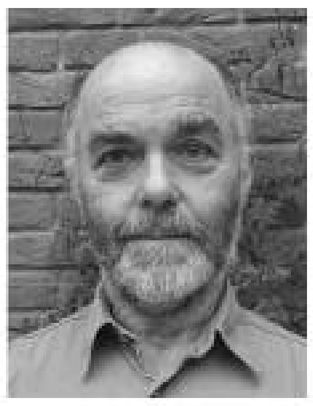
WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS **MARTIN HUGHES-JONES**

In brief

What Hardy woody plants with attractive berries to add autumn and winter interest in the garden.
Origins Species found throughout temperate climates and hybridised plants of garden origin.
Season From late summer through autumn; many have fruits persisting well into winter.
Size Predominantly medium to large shrubs and some small trees.
Conditions Many will tolerate quite difficult situations if given sufficient light to promote flowering and fruit bearing.



COTONEASTER LACTEUS
Large evergreen shrub with arching branches of matt, dark-green, oval leaves. Small, white flowers give way to impressive clusters of orange-red berries, which persist untouched by birds well into winter. 2.5-4m in height. AGM*. RHS H6. USDA 7a-10b†.



Martin Hughes-Jones, together with Susan Proud, runs Holbrook Garden and Sampford Shrubs nursery in Devon.

Berried plants seem to be dropping off many gardeners' radar. Garden stalwarts, such as cotoneasters and hollies, are somewhat out of fashion, while others simply go unnoticed. In spring when most of us head to our nearest nursery or garden centre, there are no berries or vibrant autumn foliage to attract our attention. Yet berried plants and trees are wonderful value. Their colours strengthen with autumn's shortening days, and they provide both ornament and food – not just for us but also for the wildlife that shares our gardens.

Many trees, including crab apples, offer both spectacular fruit and flower. *Malus hupehensis* (see page 51), for example, provides a stunning display of almost white blossom in May and then in autumn numerous small crabs that are of great interest to redwings and fieldfares. However, some crab apples give only a short season of colour before their fruits rot – not necessarily a bad thing if your priorities are attracting autumn birds or harvesting the fruit for crab-apple jelly.

Birds will also devour the berries of our native *Sorbus aucuparia* (the mountain ash or rowan) as soon as they colour up in late July. They tend to go for red berries first then orange, yellow, pink and finally white. For red berries and excellent foliage *Sorbus sargentiana* (page 49) or the more orange *Sorbus commixta* 'Embley', are good choices.

The white berries of *Sorbus hupehensis* and the pink variety *Sorbus hupehensis* var. *obtusa* will often remain uneaten until well after Christmas. Both have beautiful crimson purple leaves in autumn, and both are slender – growing to barely four metres and providing only light shade for plants beneath.

This colour-coded fruit preference of birds also seems to apply to *Cotoneasters* and the yellow-berried forms are generally left alone the longest. But it's the red berried forms that are the most jolly.

Think jolly red berries and it's possibly hollies, those dark-green, sprawling shrubs growing in native oak or beech woodland that come to mind. Hollies will tolerate and even thrive in some hostile growing positions ▷

---

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

▷ but with a careful choice and decent conditions you can have a compact, glossy leaved evergreen with attractive foliage throughout the year and berries to boot.

Variegated hollies can look over fussy and out of place if badly positioned but there are exceptions. *Ilex aquifolium* 'Argentea Marginata' (page 51) is an excellent silver-variegated, female holly – but it will spread. For more modest dimensions *Ilex* x *altaclerensis* 'Lawsoniana' or *Ilex* x *altaclerensis* 'Golden King' are worthy contenders, although the foliage might be too gaudy for some tastes. If you prefer a plain green leaf look out for *Ilex* 'Good Taste' or *Ilex* 'Lydia Morris'.

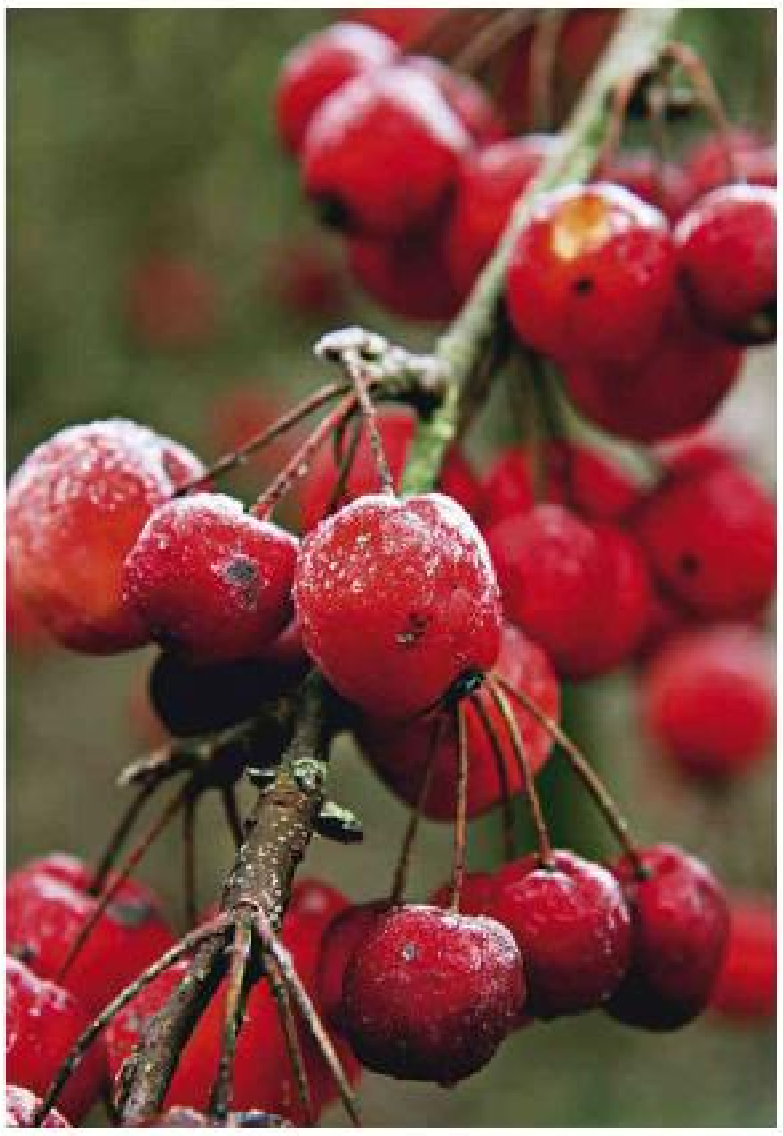
One plant many visitors comment on in our own garden is black bryony or *Tamus communis.* The heart-shaped leaves of this climber might be confused with unwelcome bindweed, but bryony has a robust glossy leaf while that of bindweed is flabby and matt green. Its orange and red showy fruits are poisonous, which may explain why they last through winter and well into spring. We have it clambering up the rather gaunt stems of a *Rosa banksiae*, which it decorates for a full six months.

Indestructible, evergreen *Euonymus fortunei* can sometimes be overused, but we have a deciduous native species with very showy fruits and good leaf colour. *Euonymus europaeus* (page 52), is one of the best spindles and even when the last of the bright orange berries wrapped in a cerise seed case are gone, the corky and winged stems remain attractive.

One last native, *Crataegus monogyna* – the modest hawthorn or may tree (page 50) – is also worth considering. It may not be in the premier league of berried plants, but its dark red haws in November make it a good choice for hedges and it will thrive in the most hopeless conditions. *Crataegus persimilis* 'Prunifolia' is a more showy small tree with brighter orange-red fruits and leaves that turn orange-gold before they fall.

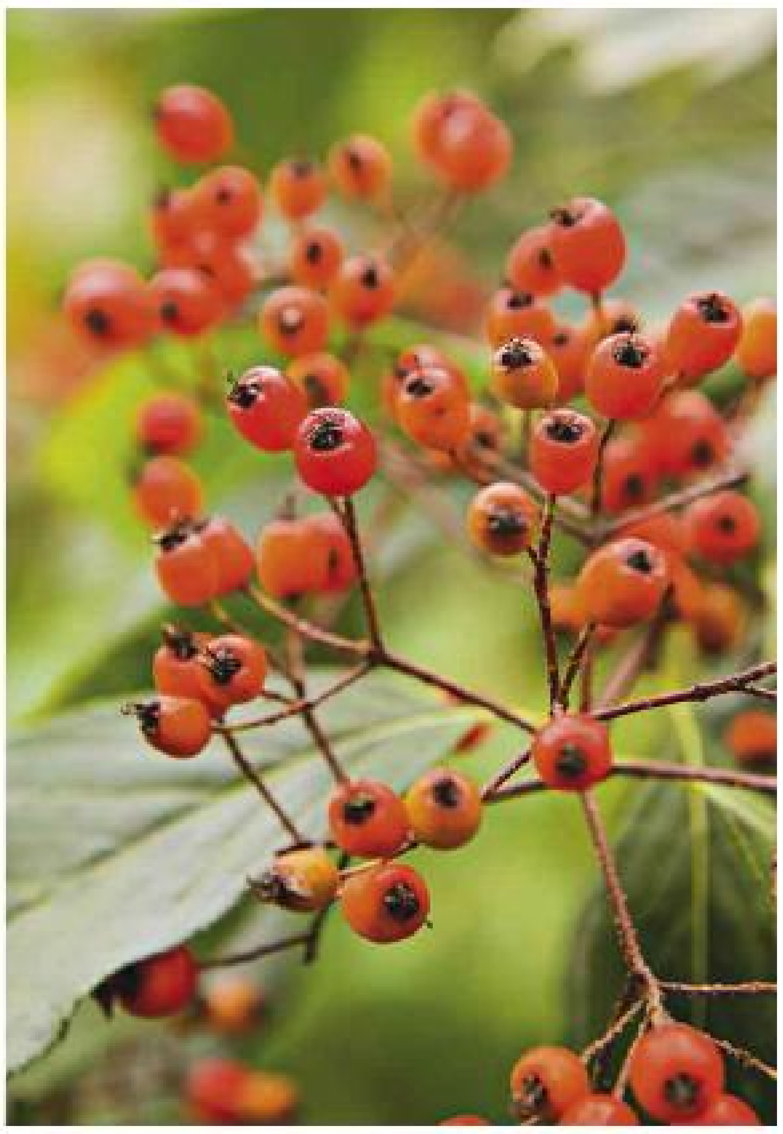
All berried plants will add winter colour and year-long structure to your garden, but do your research before you buy. If you spend some time looking at them in an arboretum or garden you'll get a feel for their size, character and preferred conditions. This is how I found *Photinia beauverdiana* (see above, right) – now one of my favourite garden trees.

• Martin's choice of the best ornamental berries continues over the next six pages.



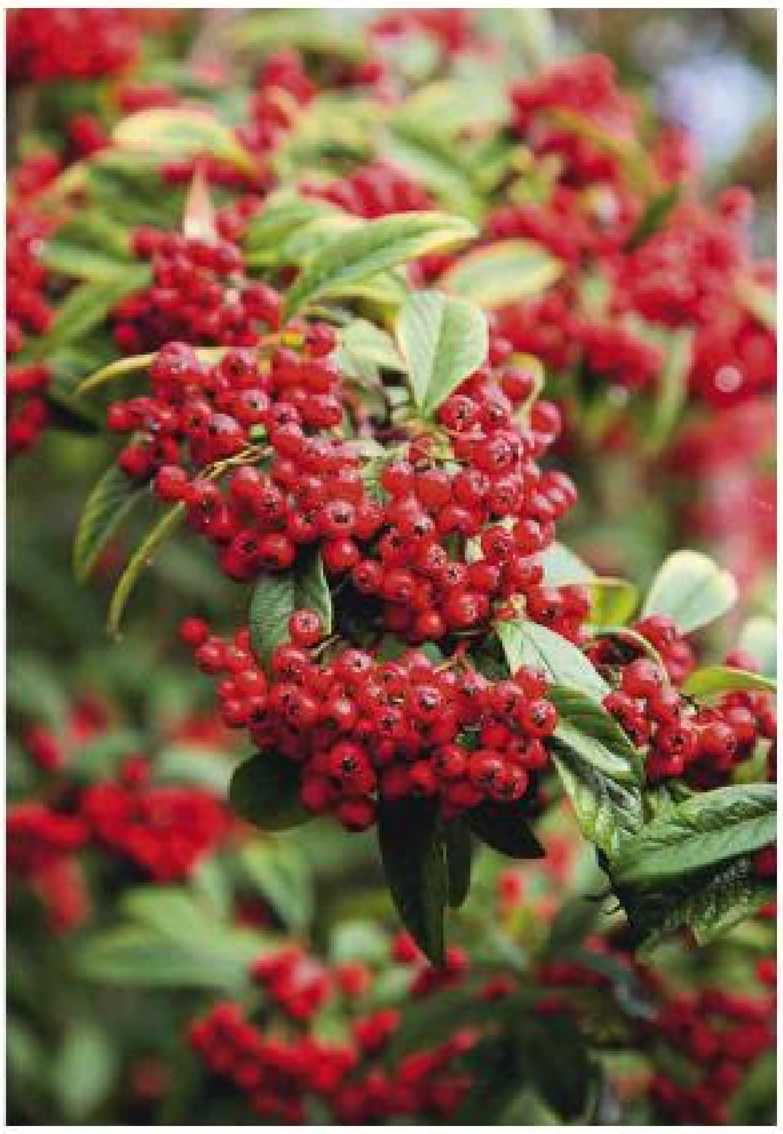
***MALUS* X *ROBUSTA* 'RED SENTINEL'**

The crabs of this small tree mature quite late but often persist right through winter. Usually fruits well and when it does so the branches are weighed down in cascades of ripe fruit. 4-8m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8a.



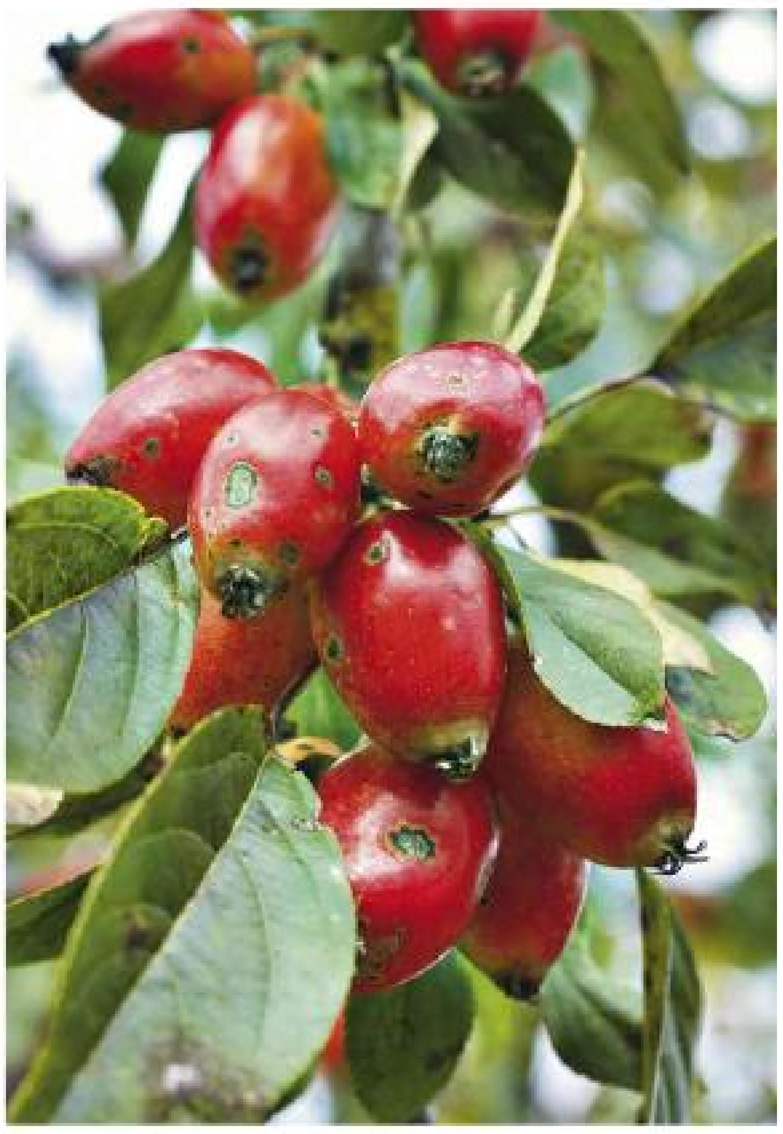
PHOTINIA BEAUVERDIANA

Deciduous, with good golden leaf colour, copious orange berries in autumn and heads of hawthorn-like flowers in spring. Casts only light shade allowing underplanting with shrubs and herbaceous plants. 5m. USDA 6b-9a.



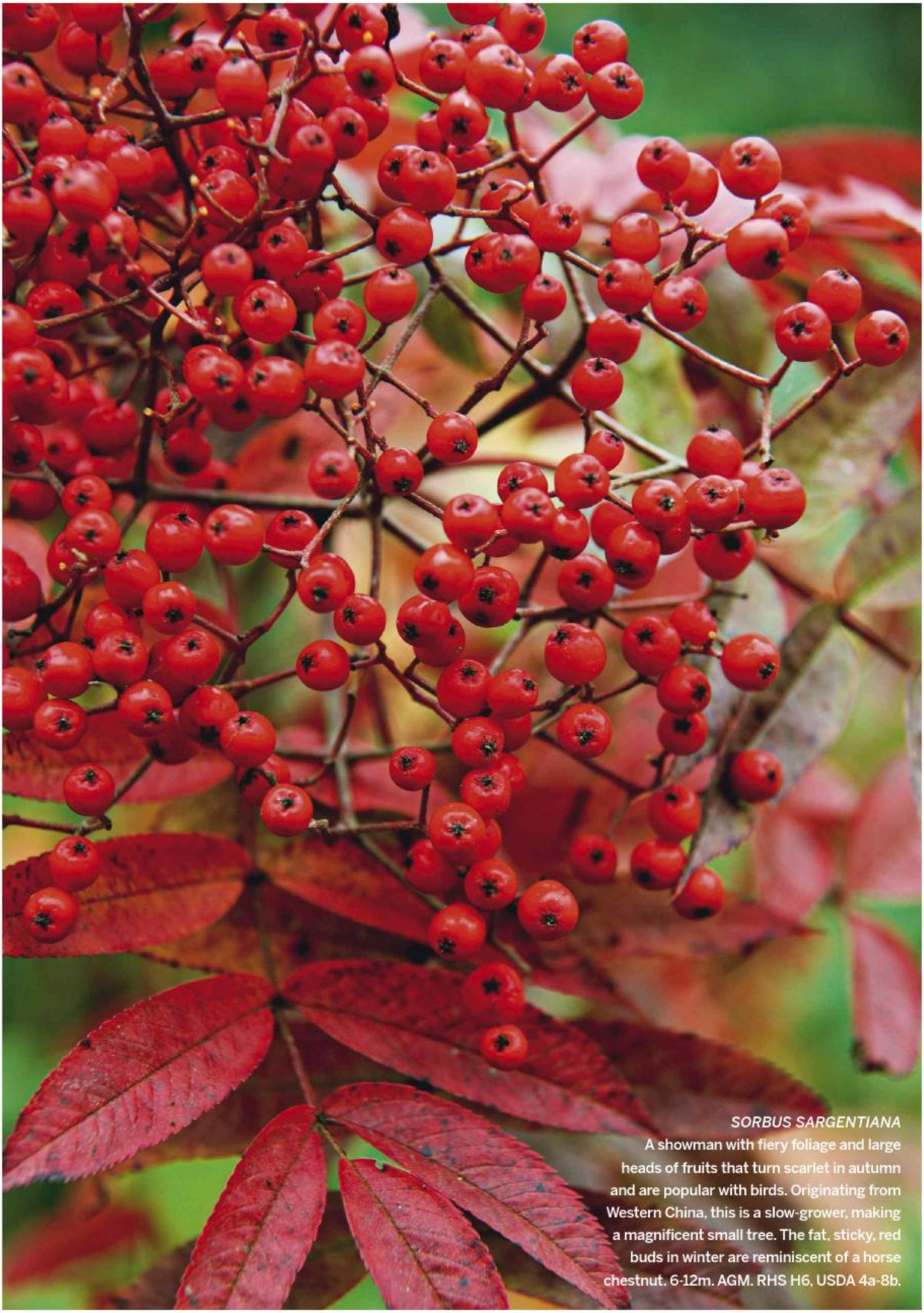
***COTONEASTER FRIGIDUS* 'CORNUBIA'**

Evergreen with red berries, which ripen so late that they're ignored by the birds. Makes an effective and hardy hedge. Easy to grow. Tolerates shade and difficult ground. 4-8m. AGM. RHS H6. USDA 6a-9b.

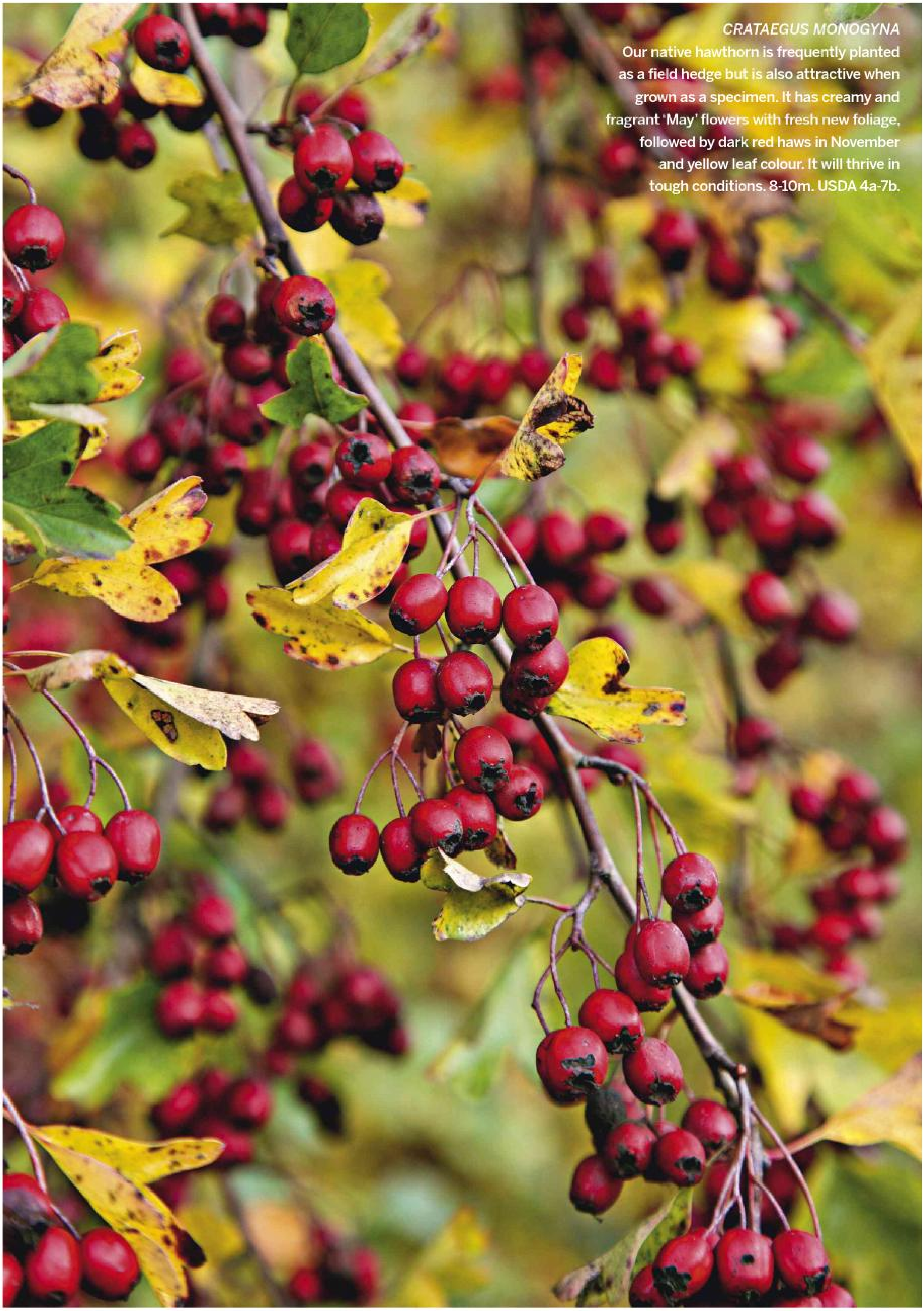


***MALUS* 'JOHN DOWNIE'**

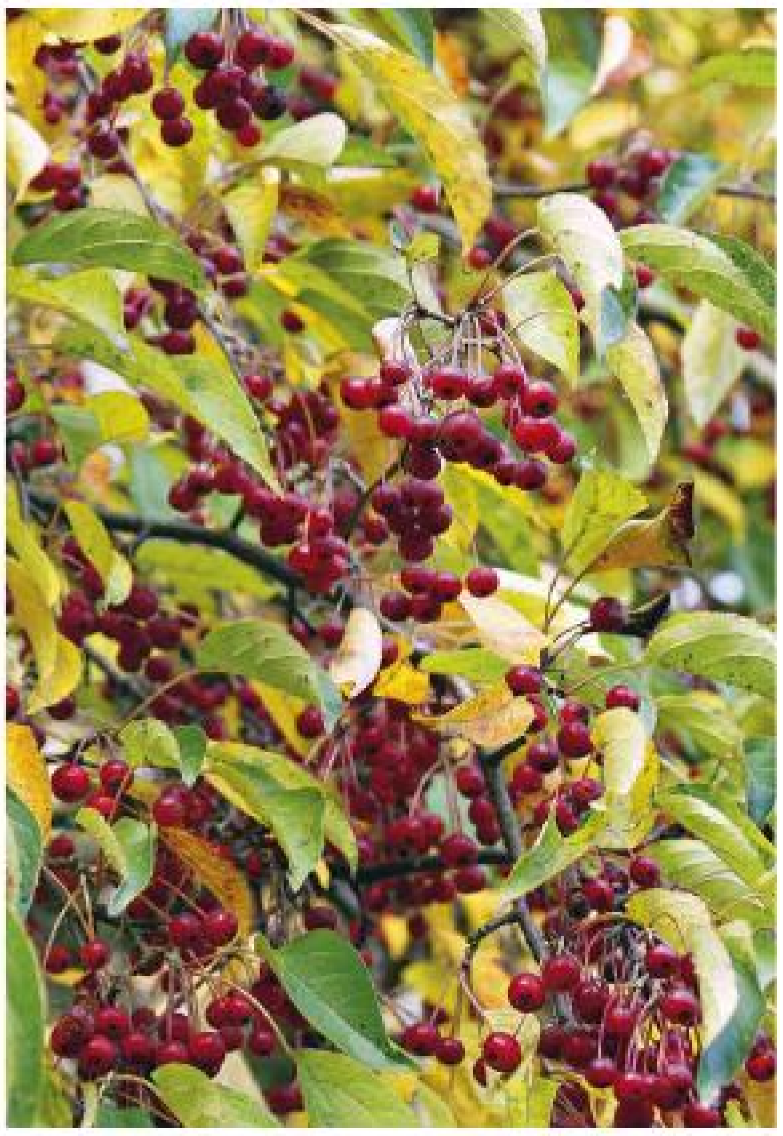
Small tree with plum-like red and yellow fruits that mature early. The blossom in May is pink in bud and opens to creamy white. The abundant fruit is perfect for making jelly. Also useful as a pollinator for apple trees. 4-8m. RHS H4.



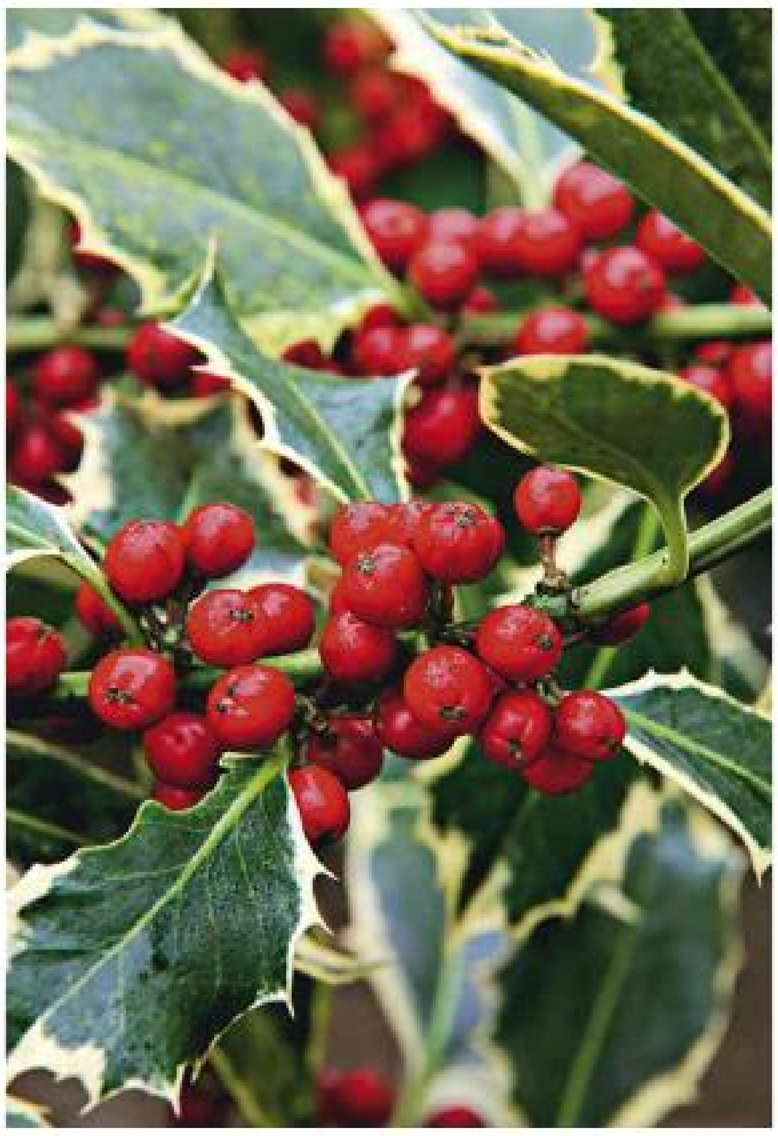
SORBUS SARGENTIANA
A showman with fiery foliage and large heads of fruits that turn scarlet in autumn and are popular with birds. Originating from Western China, this is a slow-grower, making a magnificent small tree. The fat, sticky, red buds in winter are reminiscent of a horse chestnut. 6-12m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.



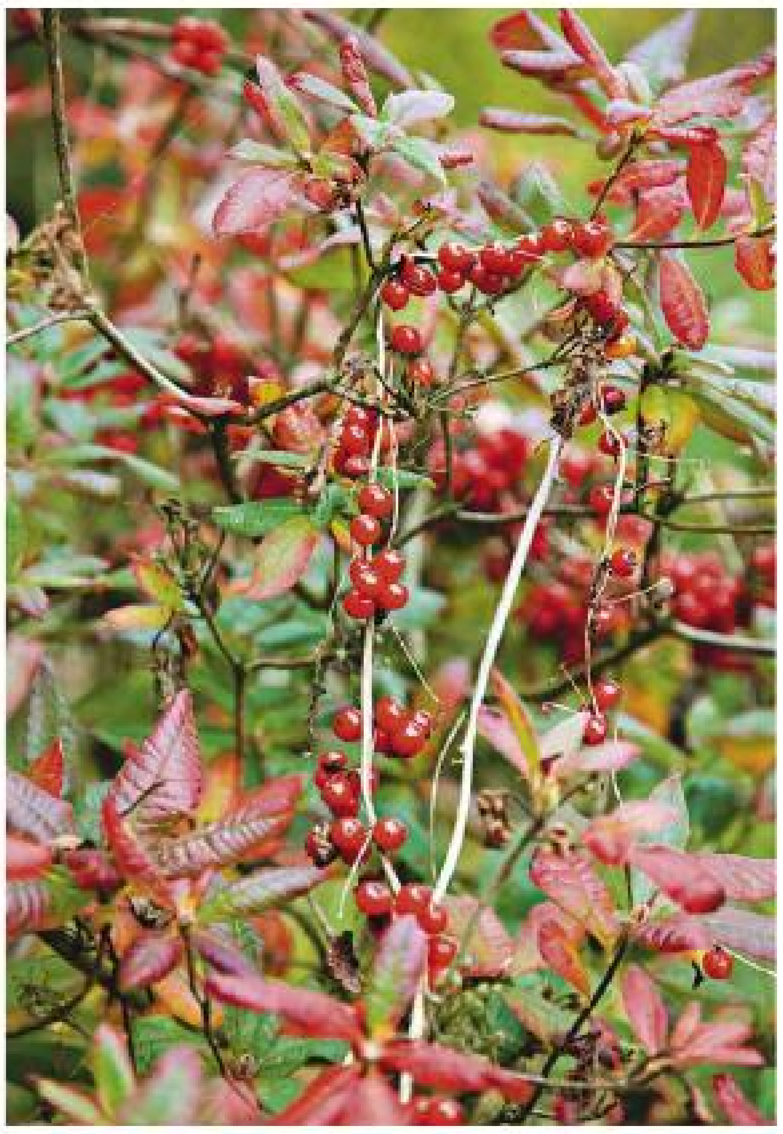
CRATAEGUS MONOGYNA
Our native hawthorn is frequently planted as a field hedge but is also attractive when grown as a specimen. It has creamy and fragrant 'May' flowers with fresh new foliage, followed by dark red haws in November and yellow leaf colour. It will thrive in tough conditions. 8-10m. USDA 4a-7b.



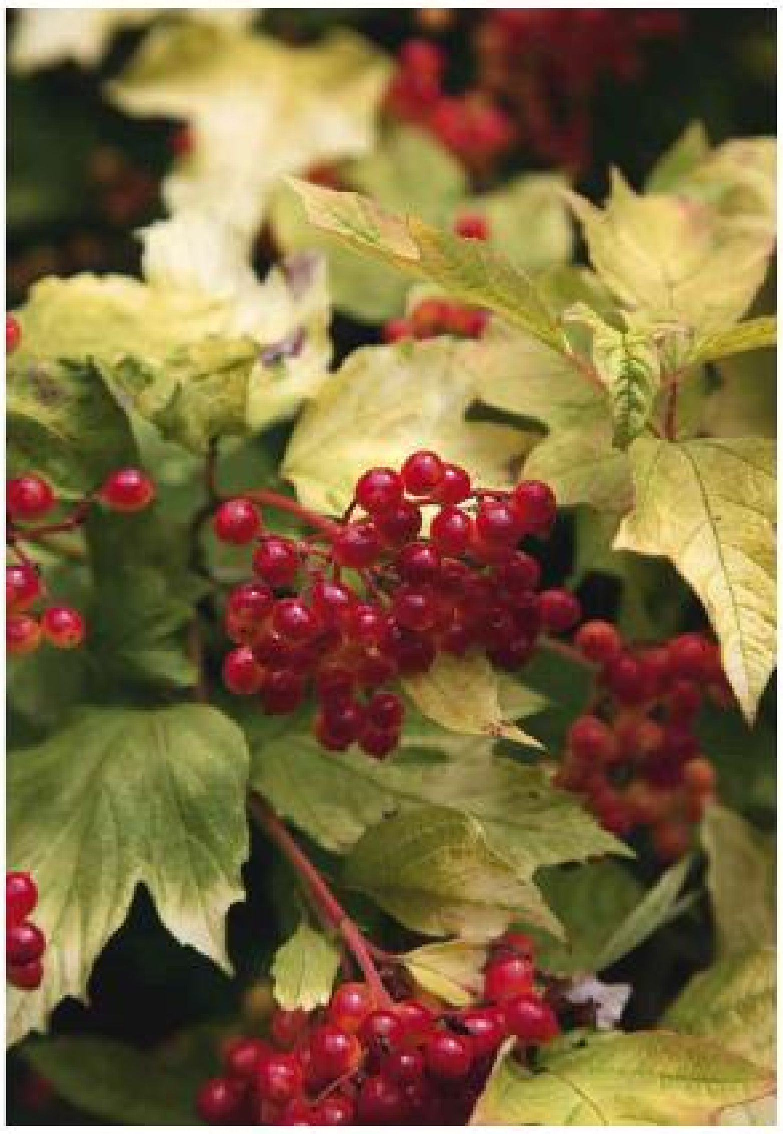
MALUS HUPEHENSIS
A medium-sized tree popular with redwings and other thrushes. Small orange and red fruits ripen from September onwards and persist well into winter. May blossom is prolific and white. 4-8m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.



ILEX AQUIFOLIUM **'ARGENTEA MARGINATA'**
A female holly with a discrete golden margin to the leaf and masses of bright red berries in autumn to winter. All berrying hollies need a male plant somewhere in the offing. Slow growing, it can reach over 12m. AGM. RHS H6.



TAMUS COMMUNIS
Black bryony is an attractive native perennial climber with glossy dark green, heart-shaped leaves (not shown) followed by red berries in autumn. You'll see it winding through hedges like a string of red fairy lights. USDA 7b-10a.



VIBURNUM OPULUS **'AUREUM'**
Large, golden-leaved shrub – up to 3m wide – so needs space, but easy to grow and very hardy. Benefits from selective pruning every second or third year in late winter to keep a good shape. 2-5m. RHS H4, USDA 4a-8b.

When to plant

Prepare soil and plant in autumn through to spring when ground conditions are favourable but the actual planting is the easy bit. It needs to be preceded by thorough research so that when you go shopping you have a firm idea of what you want.

Choosing your plant

Before deciding which berried plants will work best in your garden you need to consider the following:

- How much light and space is available?
- Is the soil and drainage suitable?
- At what time of year do you want most interest?
- Who is to benefit? Are you looking for ornament, do want to harvest berries for preserves or are you looking to provide food for wildlife?
- How big will this plant become?
- Will the plant look appropriate – not too wild for a neatly manicured space or too twee for a neglected woodland corner?
- Is pollination a factor to consider?

Obtaining your plant

- Be open minded – if you visit a garden and see the exact plant you want for sale and it is healthy then buy it, even if it's not the exact size or shape you want or you are not quite ready for it – because some berried plants are hard to obtain and there are various clones on the market.
- Be patient – seed raising and grafting is great fun and quicker than you'd imagine.
- Be patient – small plants are often a better choice and establish quicker.
- Purchased plants can be 'heeled in' (planted temporarily into the soil) to protect roots over winter while you prepare the site.

Planting combinations

Berried plants work well with a range of other autumn plants:

- The golds of big grasses in the autumn such as *Molinia* and *Stipa* look wonderful with red berries on deciduous shrubs of a similar scale such as guelder rose and crab apples.

- Summer flowering clematis especially the *Clematis viticella* forms – trailing through *Viburnum opulus* – provides an extended season of interest and contrasts.
- Native volunteers, for example black bryony which will scramble though shrubs, can enhance autumn interest beautifully.
- Hoar frost will add further decoration to long-lasting berries later in the season.

Where to see

- **Batsford Arboretum**
  Batsford, Moreton-in-Marsh,
  Gloucestershire GL56 9QB.
  Tel 01386 701441
  batsarb.co.uk

- **Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew**
  Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AB.
  Tel 020 8332 5655, kew.org

- **Westonbirt**
  The National Arboretum,
  Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8QS.
  Tel 01666 880220
  forestry.gov.uk

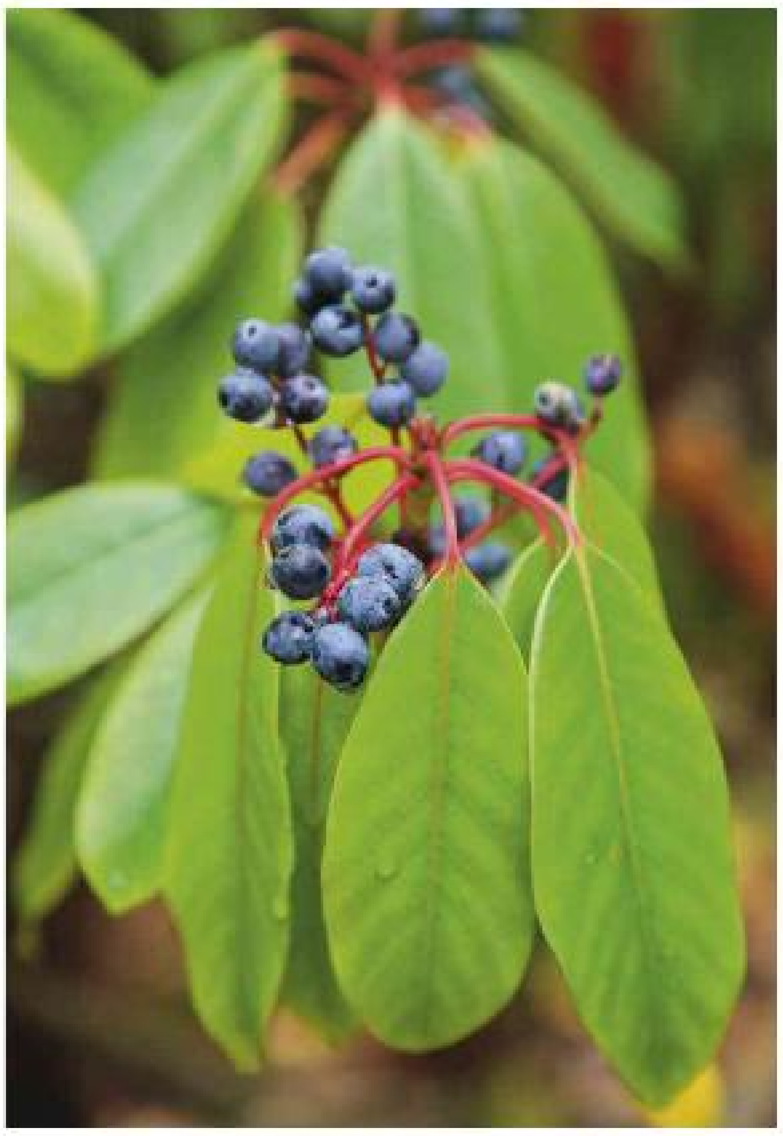
Where to buy

- **Barcham Trees Nursery**
  Eye Hill Drove,
  Cambridgeshire CB7 5XF.
  Tel 01353 720950
  barcham.co.uk

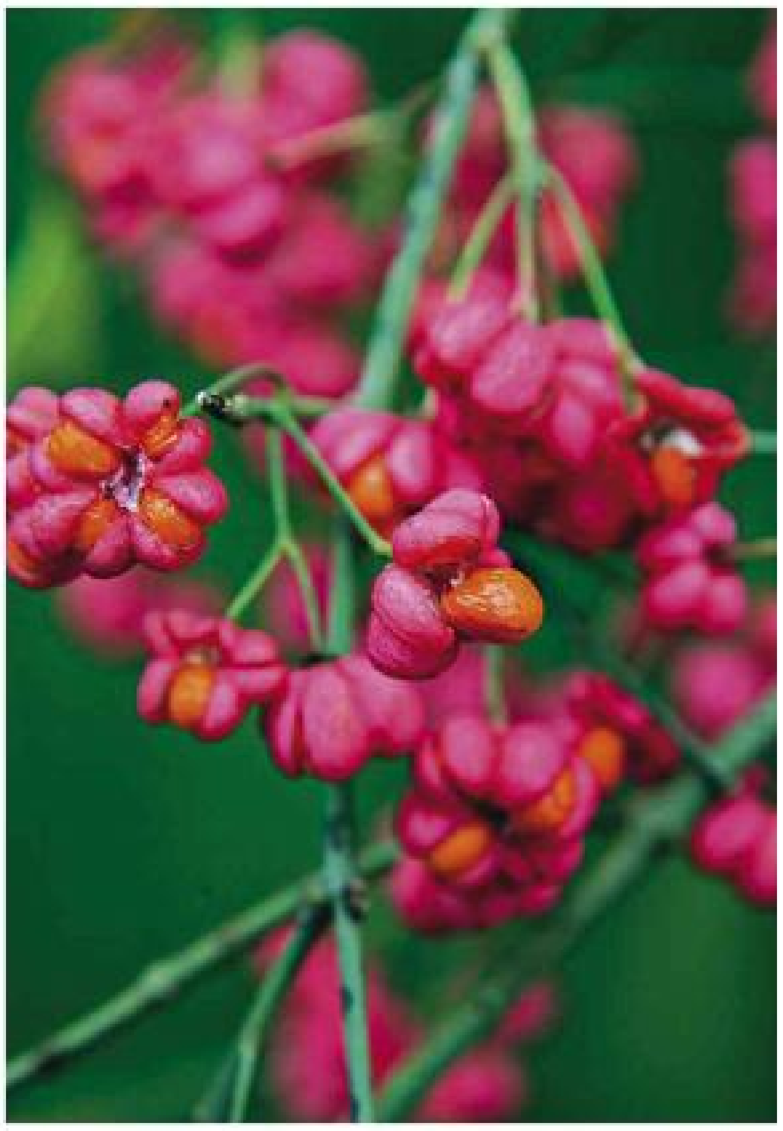
- **Bluebell Arboretum and Nursery**
  Annwell Lane, Smisby, nr Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Derbyshire LE65 2TA.
  Tel 01530 413700
  bluebellnursery.com

- **Junker's Nursery**
  Higher Cobhay,
  Milverton, Somerset TA4 1NJ.
  Tel 01823 400075
  junker.co.uk

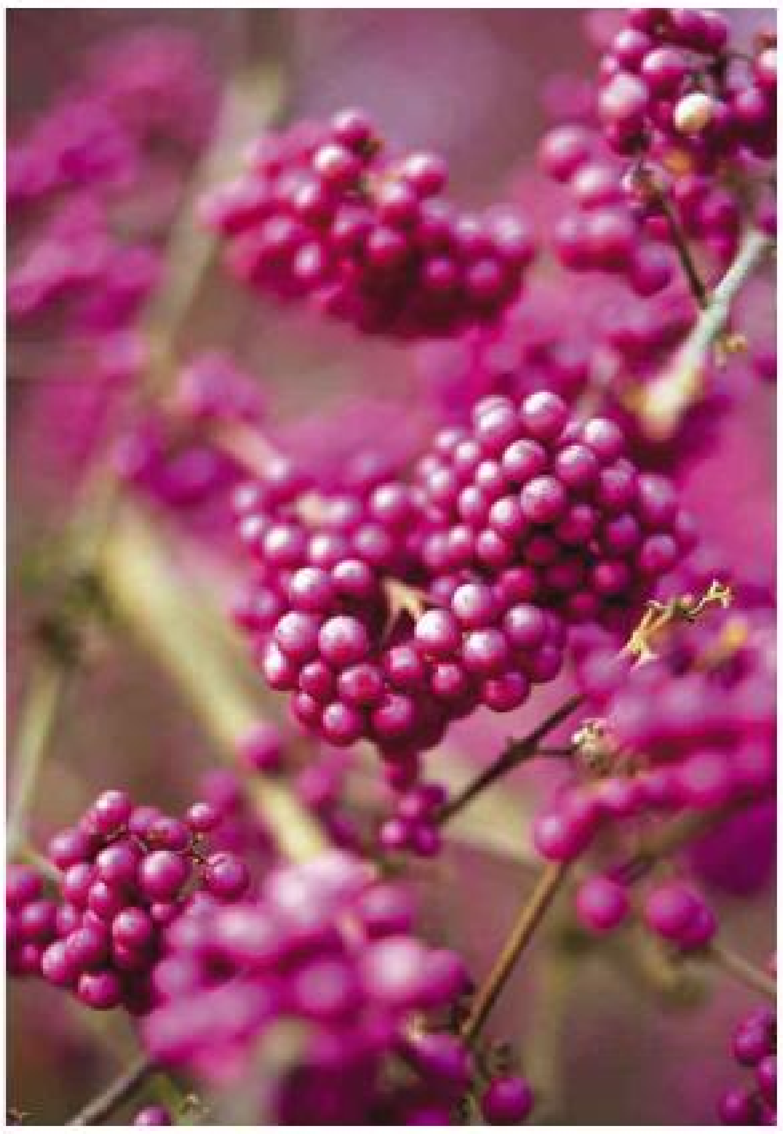
- **Majestic Trees**
  Shibden Hall Road, Halifax,
  West Yorkshire HX3 9XA.
  Tel 01422 203553
  majestictrees.co.uk



DAPHNIPHYLLUM MACROPODUM
A shrub or small tree with exotic-looking, evergreen foliage reminiscent of a rhododendron. Striking red leaf stalks, clusters of creamy flowers in spring and blue-black berries in autumn. 6m. USDA 7a-9b

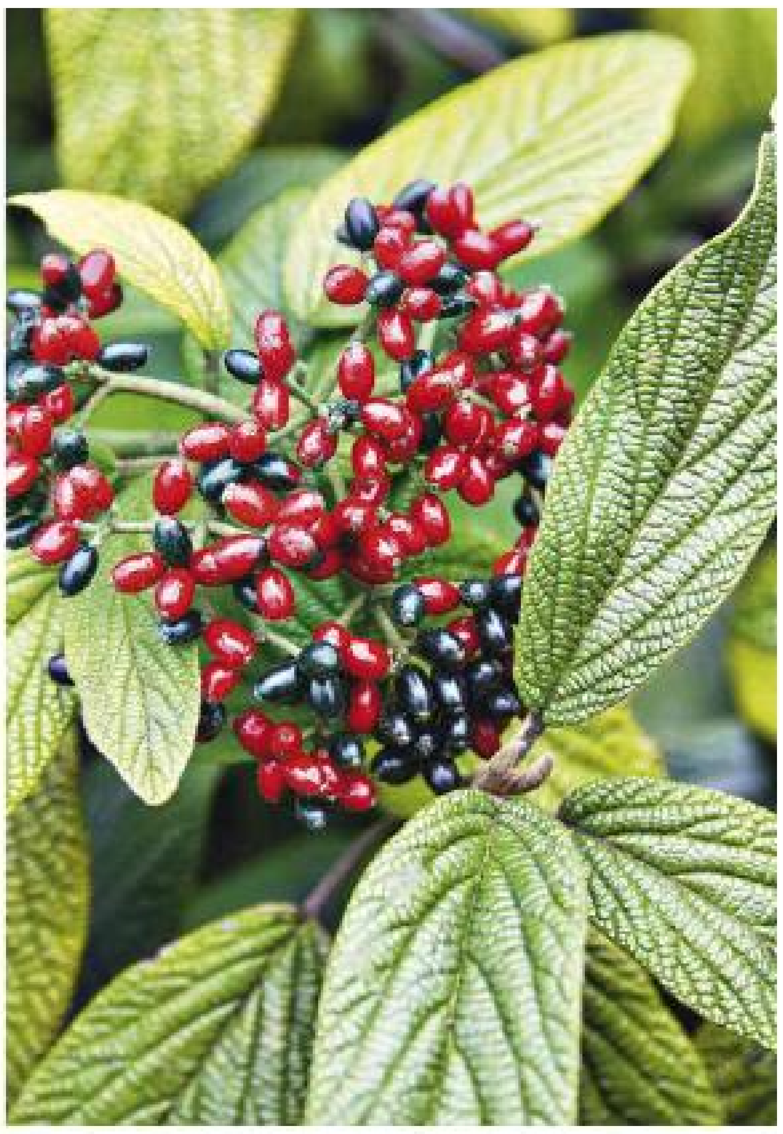


EUONYMUS EUROPAEUS
A British native, the spindle forms a twiggy shrub or small tree. Spectacular in autumn with dark crimson and purple autumn leaves and bright-orange, poisonous berries encased in cerise pods. 2.5-4m. RHS H4, USDA 5a-8b.

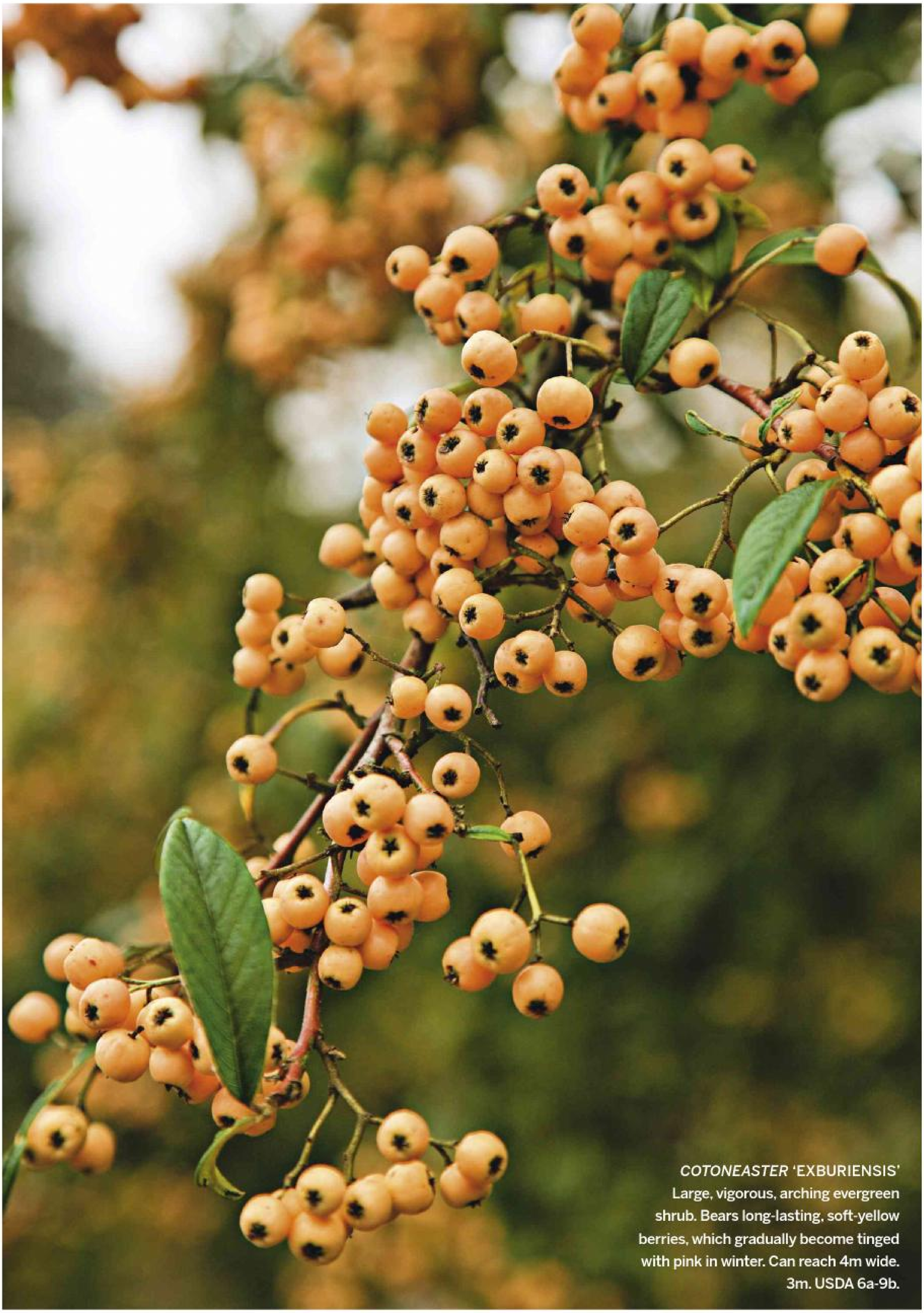


ANDREA JONES / ALAMY

CALLICARPA BODINIERI* VAR. *GIRALDII
Extraordinary violet-purple berries in autumn. Allegedly requires pollination by another plant, but I've seen enough growing and fruiting in isolation to doubt this is necessary. 2.5-4m. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



VIBURNUM RHYTIDOPHYLLUM
Large evergreen shrub with substantial leathery, somewhat sombre leaves. Produces small, white tubular flowers in late spring and attractive red berries, which ripen to black later in the year. 2.5-4m. RHS H4, USDA 5a-8b.



COTONEASTER 'EXBURIENSIS'
Large, vigorous, arching evergreen shrub. Bears long-lasting, soft-yellow berries, which gradually become tinged with pink in winter. Can reach 4m wide. 3m. USDA 6a-9b.

Michael Pollan

He's a professor, an environmental activist, a writer and above all a passionate advocate of growing and cooking your own food

WORDS **PAULA DEITZ** PORTRAIT **CHARLIE HOPKINSON**

Tall and lanky, Michael Pollan, now 58, has over the years been a charismatic figure before packed audiences as he introduced each of his seven books. His speaking presence gives fans a convincing and friendly face to the lucid, conversational tone of his writings. Emerging first as a gardener seeking culture through nature in his book *Second Nature* (1991), he has evolved into an urgent proselytiser against the pervasive corn-based industrial agri-business in favour of locally produced organic food and family meals. As expressed in his bestseller *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (2006), 'the way we eat represents our most profound engagement with the natural world'.

Pollan's culminating creed – 'Eat food, not too much, mostly plants' (from *In Defence of Food,* 2008) – reflects both his common-sense, statistically oriented goals and his relaxed, non-dogmatic practise of them in his life. Arriving at his house in Berkeley, California, through a rose-laden archway into a front garden featuring a fire pit and raised beds of vegetables and herbs, one gets his signal that 'gardening is about cooking' – but without sacrificing the lush beauty of a Northern Californian landscape. He and his wife, artist Judith Belzer, live conveniently down the street from the famous restaurant Chez Panisse, owned by his friend Alice Waters, who pioneered the serving of local, organic and seasonal ingredients.

As the Knight Professor of Science and Environmental Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley, where he also helped to establish the Berkeley Food Institute, his hope has been to incorporate his brand of journalism into the humanities since it deals with the basic matters of existence. He credits his college professors and environmental activists, such as renowned Kentucky farmer/writer Wendell Berry, with setting the examples that led to his own active role.

Raised on Long Island, Pollan studied at Bennington College in Vermont, spending a year abroad at Mansfield College, Oxford, where he studied one British author a week, with a slower pace for Shakespeare. But Bennington is where he entered into the tradition of American nature writing and learned to write conversational prose. Proceeding to earn a master's degree at Columbia University, he wrote his essay on early American literature, including Henry D Thoreau's book *Walden*. While others might praise Thoreau's experience in the wilderness, Pollan believes that Thoreau 'threw into question his support of nature' by abandoning the experimental bean field he planted for food, unable to meet the constant challenge of weeds and birds. Pollan believes Thoreau's leaving the bean field was a fateful moment in American culture – one Pollan tries to counteract by encouraging vegetable gardens on the smallest plots of land.

His own garden was created by designer Bernardo Lopez as an all-year edible landscape. After a winter of cabbage and kale, the garden burgeons with parsley, sage, thyme and marjoram and, later, cucumbers, lettuce, squash, celery, tomato plants and teepees of scarlet runner beans. Pollan says, "I love the aesthetic of a vegetable garden", but he also claims it provides exercise, the salutary effect of soil bacteria, self-reliance and confidence.

His latest book *Cooked* (Allen Lane, 2013) is based on the premise that people who cook, eat healthily. Audiences laugh when he compares the many hours people spend watching TV chefs against the minimal time they actually cook. The book is essentially an adventure story about his engagement with specific cooking techniques and the experts who guided him. When he describes these experiences, his enthusiasm for the life of food is palpable – including the details of growing it or discovering the proper sources.

President Obama took him seriously when, prior to his election in 2008, he responded to Pollan's famous *New York Times* letter to the forthcoming 'Farmer in Chief', in which he proposed reforms for the entire food system. The then senator admitted that 'our agriculture sector actually is contributing more greenhouse gases than our transportation sector.'

There is no better metaphor for Pollan's efforts to improve the eating habits of Americans than the path he mowed in an earlier meadow garden, as described in *Second Nature.* He battled to stave off encroaching grasses in the same way that his prose guides others through the onslaught of the industrial food complex to achieve a more wholesome lifestyle. □

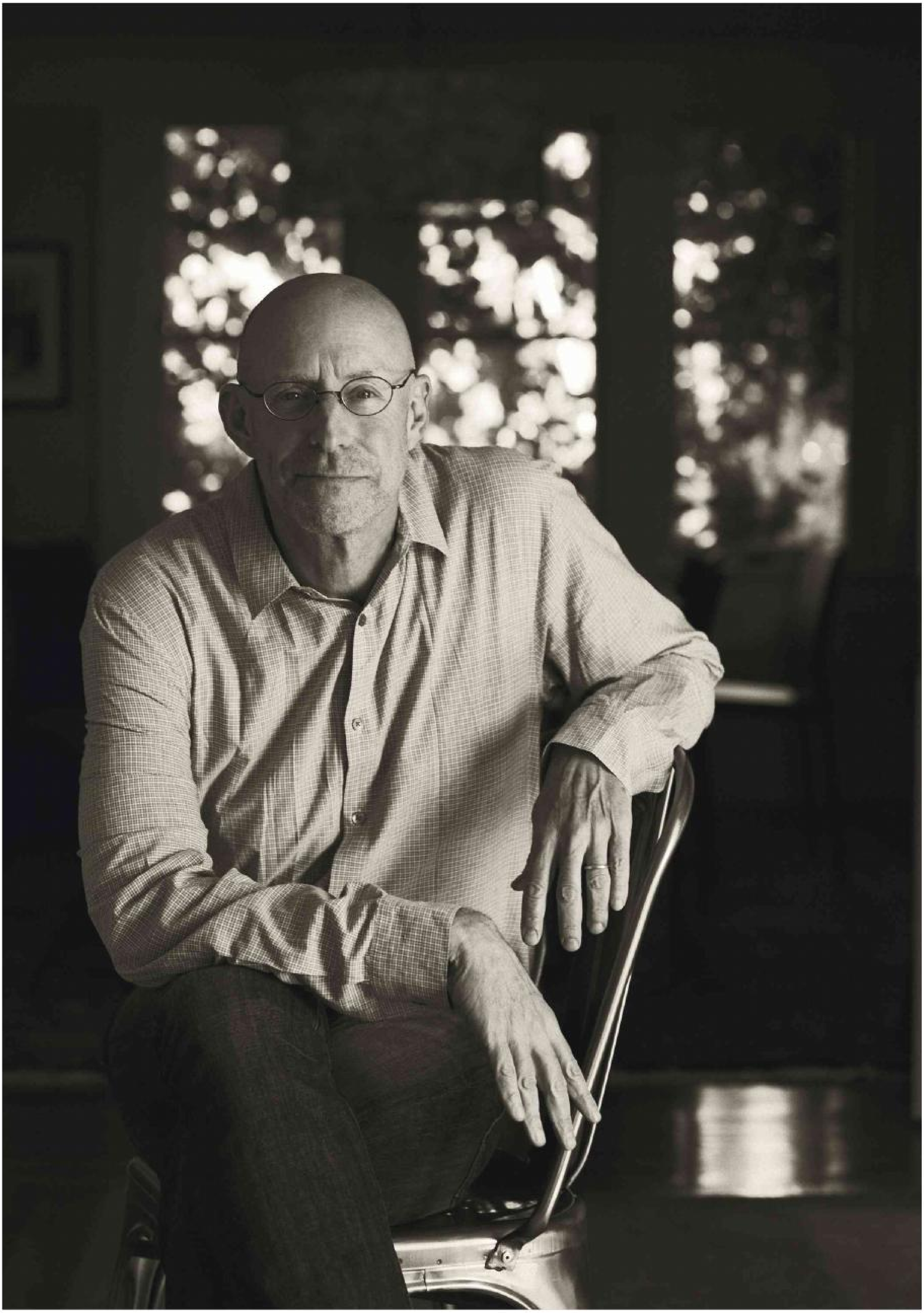
USEFUL INFORMATION

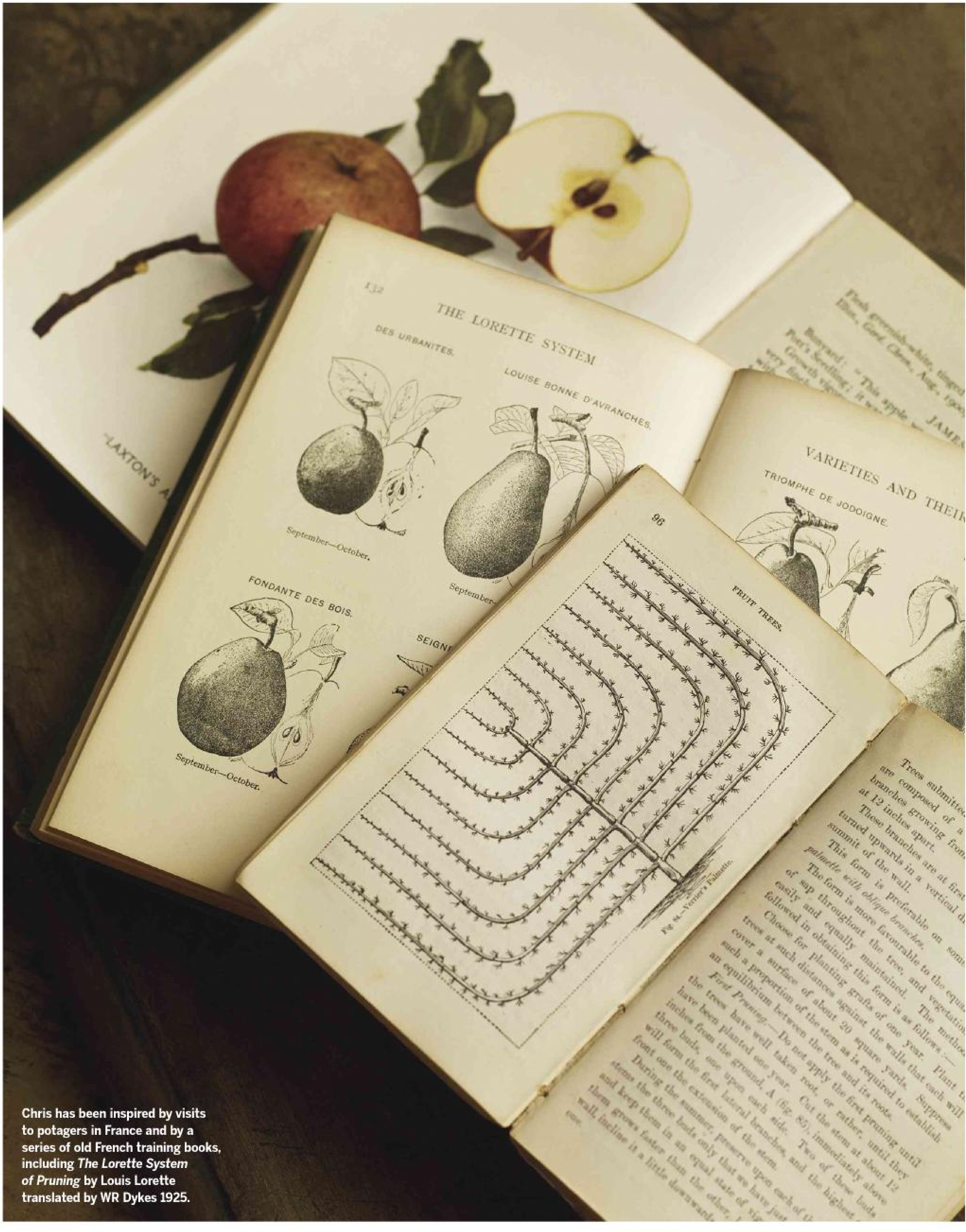
michaelpollan.com

NEXT MONTH

American landscape architect Andrea Cochran

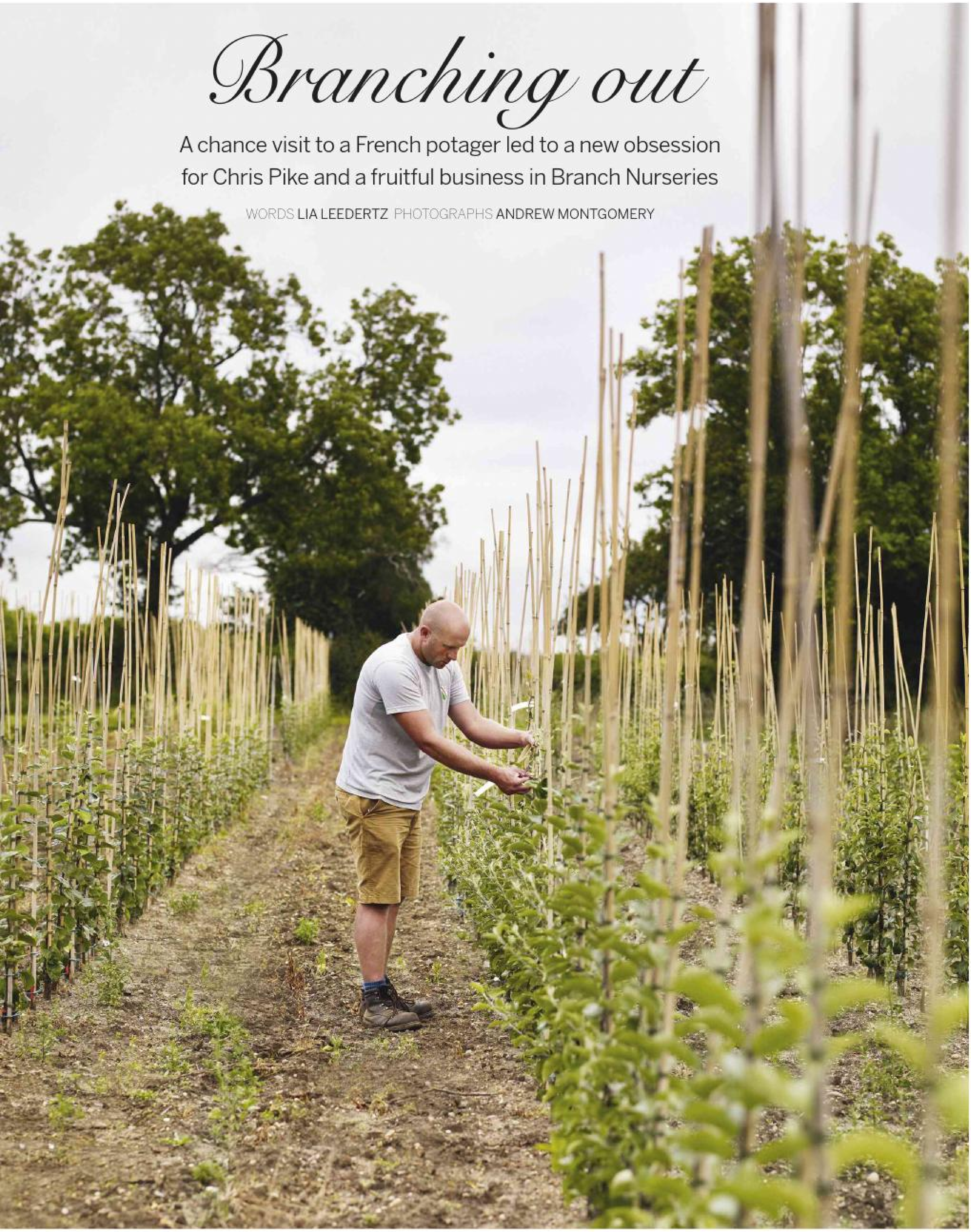
Eat food, not too much, mostly plants





THE LORETTE SYSTEM
DES URBANITES.
LOUISE BONNE D'AVRANCHES.
FONDANTE DES BOIS.
September—October.
VARIETIES AND THEIR
TRIOMPHE DE JODOIGNE.
FRUIT TREES.
"LAXTON'S A

Chris has been inspired by visits to potagers in France and by a series of old French training books, including *The Lorette System of Pruning* by Louis Lorette translated by WR Dykes 1925.



Branching out

A chance visit to a French potager led to a new obsession for Chris Pike and a fruitful business in Branch Nurseries

WORDS **LIA LEEDERTZ** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**

In a field in Nottinghamshire, Chris and Sarah Pike have done something surprisingly rare: turned old, local, British cultivars of apples and pears into U-cordons, palmette verriers and croisillons. "There isn't a great tradition of fruit training for fancy forms in Britain," says Chris. "People have always grown step-overs, fans and espaliers, but that is about the limit. This tradition comes from eastern France and Belgium and trained fruit is still most popular there."

This divergence stems from the differing historical status of our edible gardens, says Chris. "French potagers combined fruit, vegetables and flowers in an aesthetic manner whereas in the UK only the pleasure gardens full of flowers were close to the house. Productive areas were just productive."

It was in France that Chris caught the fruit training bug. "I visited Versailles, but then went across the road to the Potager du Roi. There are no signs, you could miss it, but it was once the king's vegetable garden and is full of amazing trained fruit." There he bought an old French book on the subject, *Encyclopédie Des Formes Fruitières* by Jacques Beccaletto. "The Versailles gardeners had made every shape imaginable, they were writing 'Napoleon' in pear trees."

But while spectacular, it was not as useful to Chris as another old book: *The Lorette System of Pruning*. "We train using his system, which means always pruning in the second week of August." At this time shortening days send a signal to the plant not to put on further growth, and all energy goes into making fruit buds instead. Cut earlier than this and you risk encouraging new shoots in places you don't want them; later and the buds have less time to swell. "We also cut back new shoots twice, as Lorette advocates, which adds another year on to the process but helps create a cluster of shoots in one small area. This allows you to select two shoots to train from almost exactly the same point of the stem."

There is a reason only apple and pear trees are trained in these extravagant ways. "They fruit on old wood," says Chris, "producing clusters of spurs that are a little like coral: they just build up over the years." Plums and cherries also form spurs, but short-lived ones, while peaches and nectarines fruit best on young wood, so really need to be trained as fans with replaceable main stems. But despite the malleability of apples and pears, there are few growers in the UK creating anything fancy with old British varieties. It's a gap in the market Chris decided he could fill while working for garden designer Arne Maynard.

On elaborately trained fruit the angles need to be sharp and the attention to detail precise, and not just for aesthetic reasons. "You lower the limbs to the horizontal to slow the sap and the plant's growth. If one limb is slightly more angled towards the vertical than its opposite, or a curve is different, one side can grow more strongly and the plant will become lopsided over time." For this reason it's Sarah – a trained florist – who takes care of the actual training. "She's just better at it," says Chris. But it is Chris who has the fetish for old, often local varieties. He chooses those he has come to love, such as apples 'William Crump', 'Reverend Wilks', 'Cellini', 'Adam's Pearmain', and 'Beauty of Bath' and is growing over 70 this year, and 30 different pears. "People do buy them," he says "but let's not fool ourselves. This is my equivalent of the train set in the attic." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Visit branchnurseries.co.uk for details of Chris and Sarah's fruit tree price list and availability. GARDENS ILLUSTRATED readers can buy three maiden fruit trees, ready to be shaped from Branch Nurseries for the special price of £24. See page 105.

Fruitful training

Follow Chris's step-by-step guide and learn how to create your own trained fruit trees.

1 Chris bud-grafts his chosen variety on to a dwarfing rootstock in winter, and then the growth is tied into a cane as it grows.

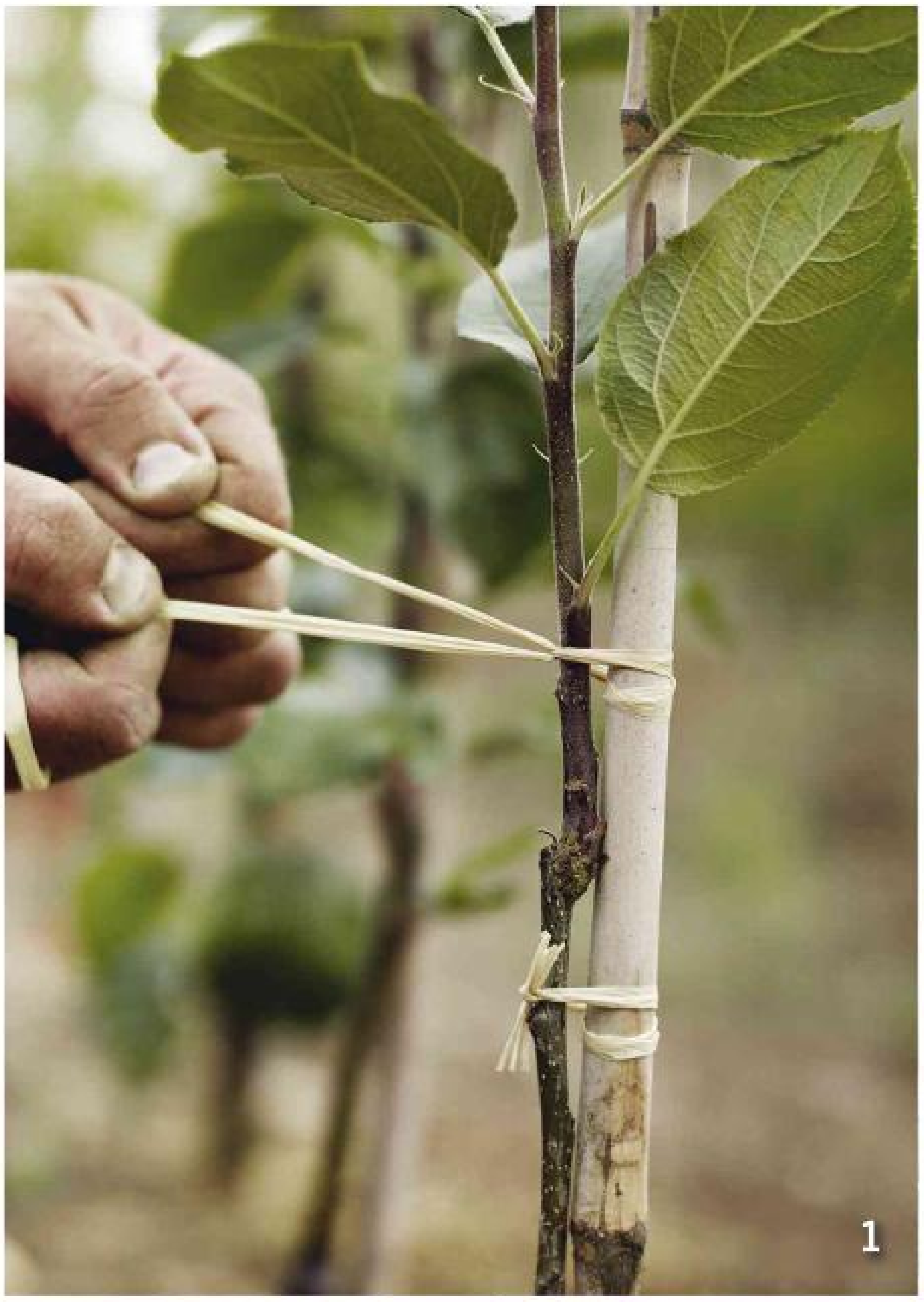
2 In August it is cut back to the required height: 35cm from the ground for a step-over, 50cm for most other shapes.

After 15cm of growth, Chris cuts the tree back to the exact same point again. This creates a cluster of buds on one point of the stem which will then all grow at the same level, and makes it easy to select two branches to train horizontally, or at 45 degrees for a Belgian fence.

Once these buds turn into shoots, Chris or Sarah selects the best-placed ones and starts tying down. A central stem can be selected from the cluster to carry the shape on upwards. The double cutting back helps to keep this central point in balance with the rest of the limbs, and prevent it from drawing too much energy.

3 Growth is tied into the frame every 10cm during the crucial early stages of training, and is only ever left to grow free for 15cm before tying in.

4 Corners can be sharp or shallow, but it is vital that the shape of the two sides is perfectly matched.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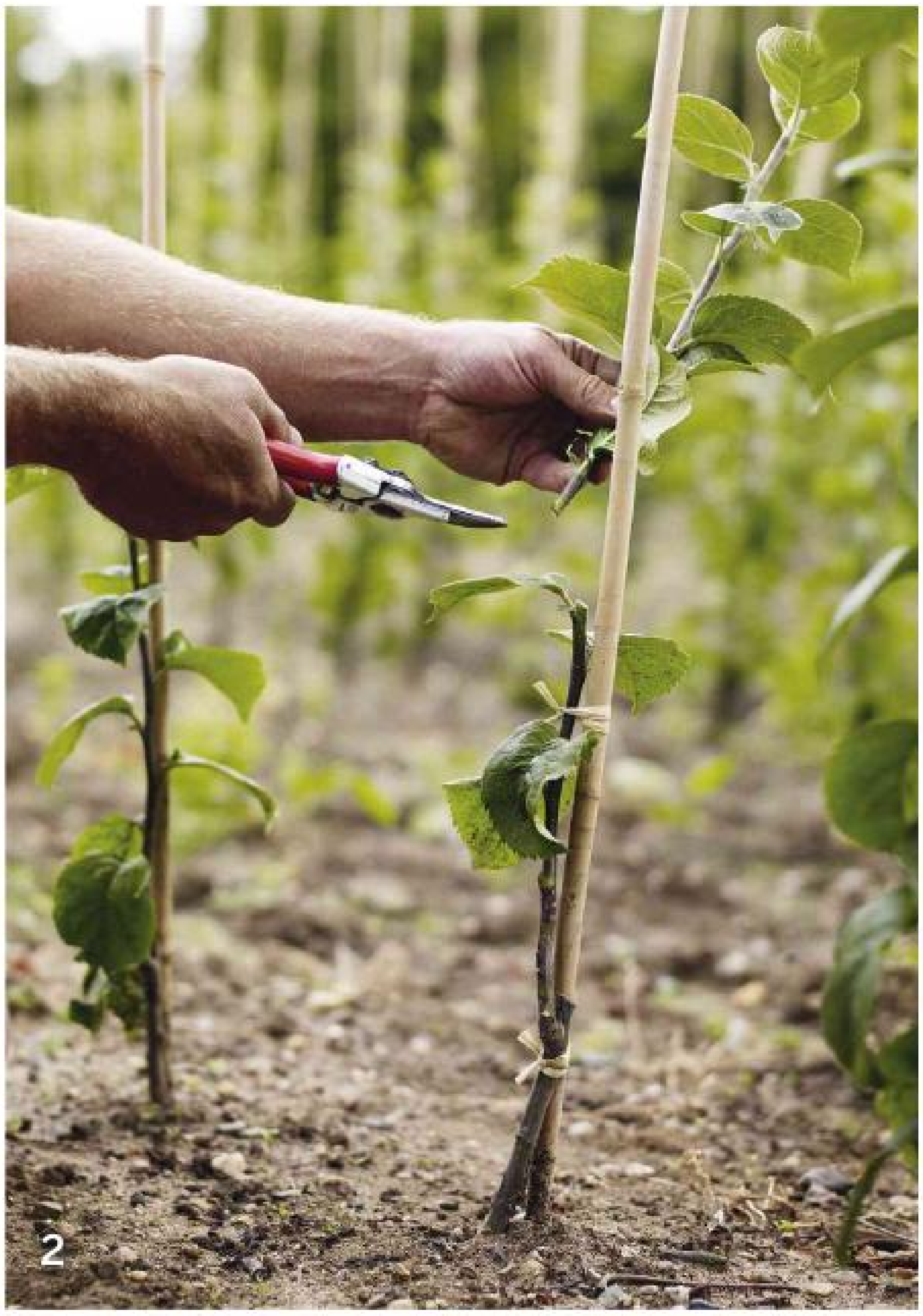
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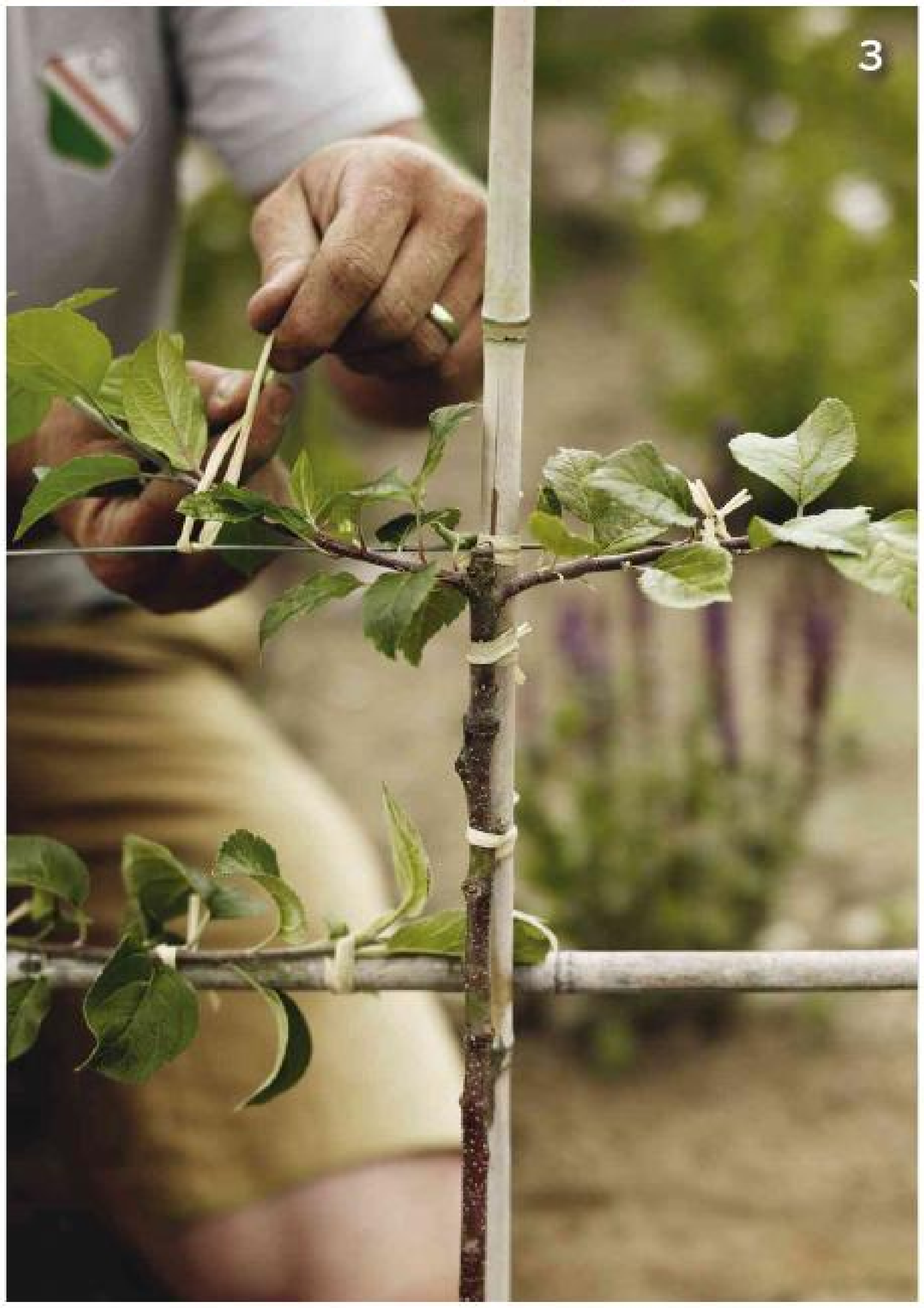
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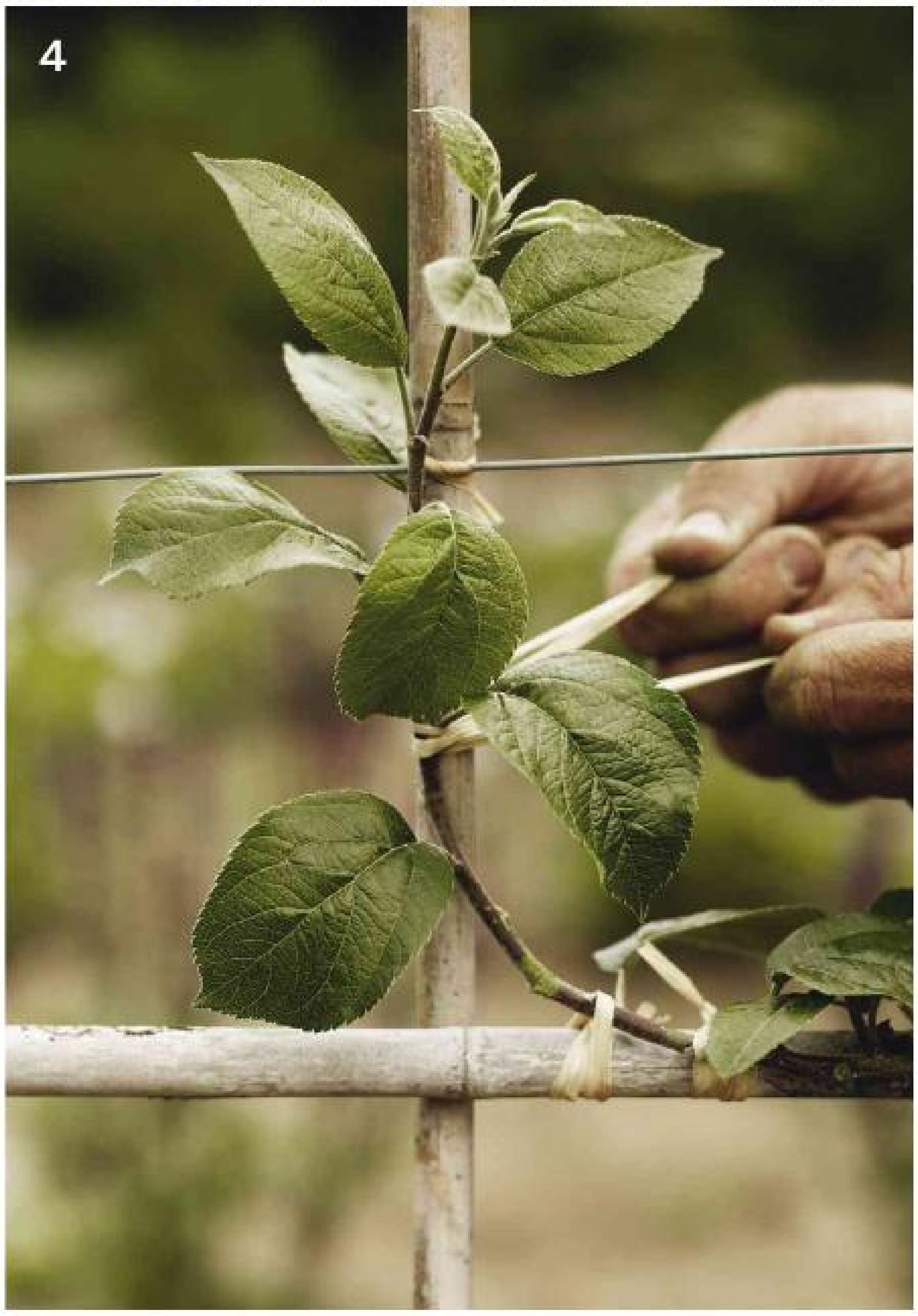
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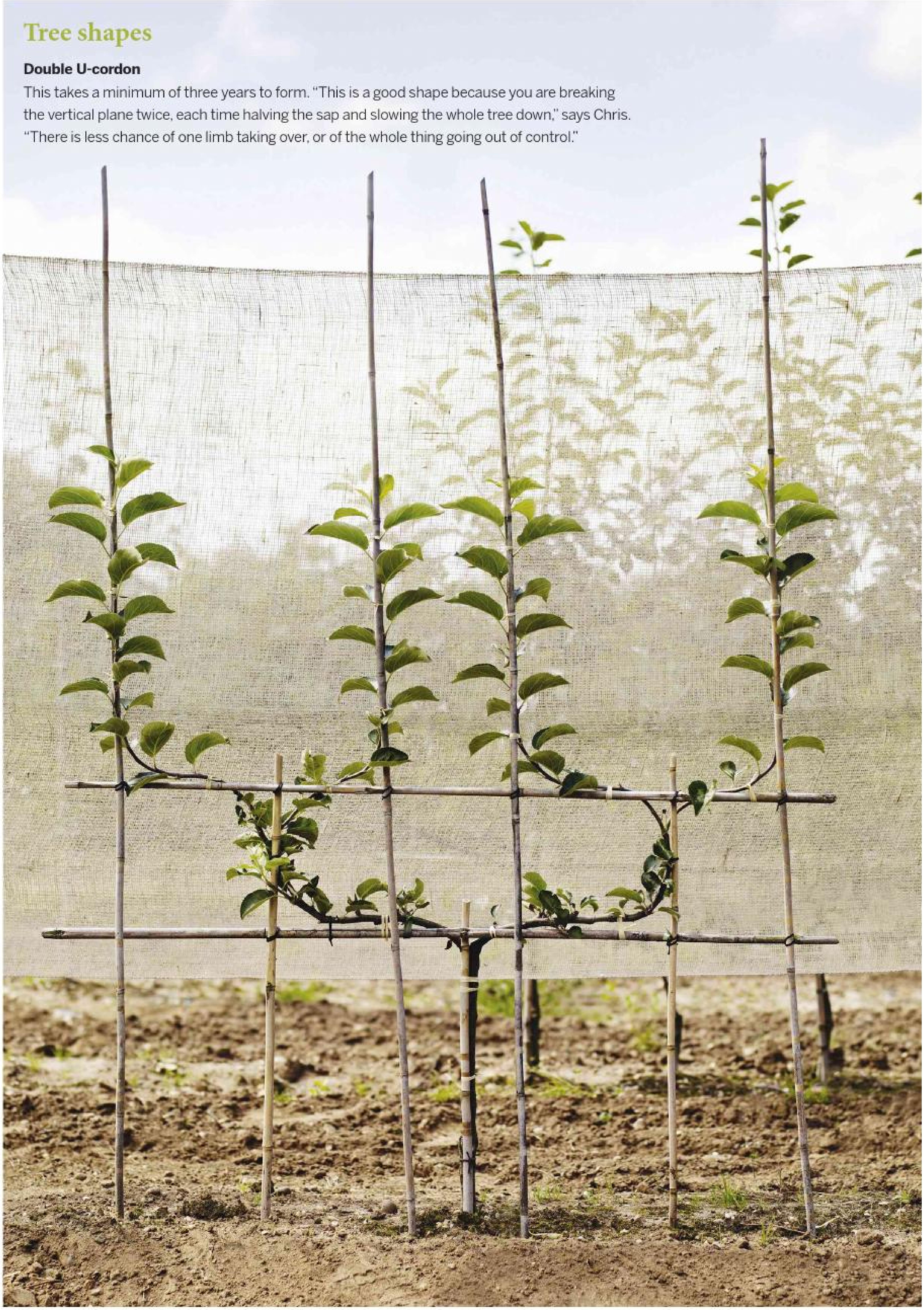
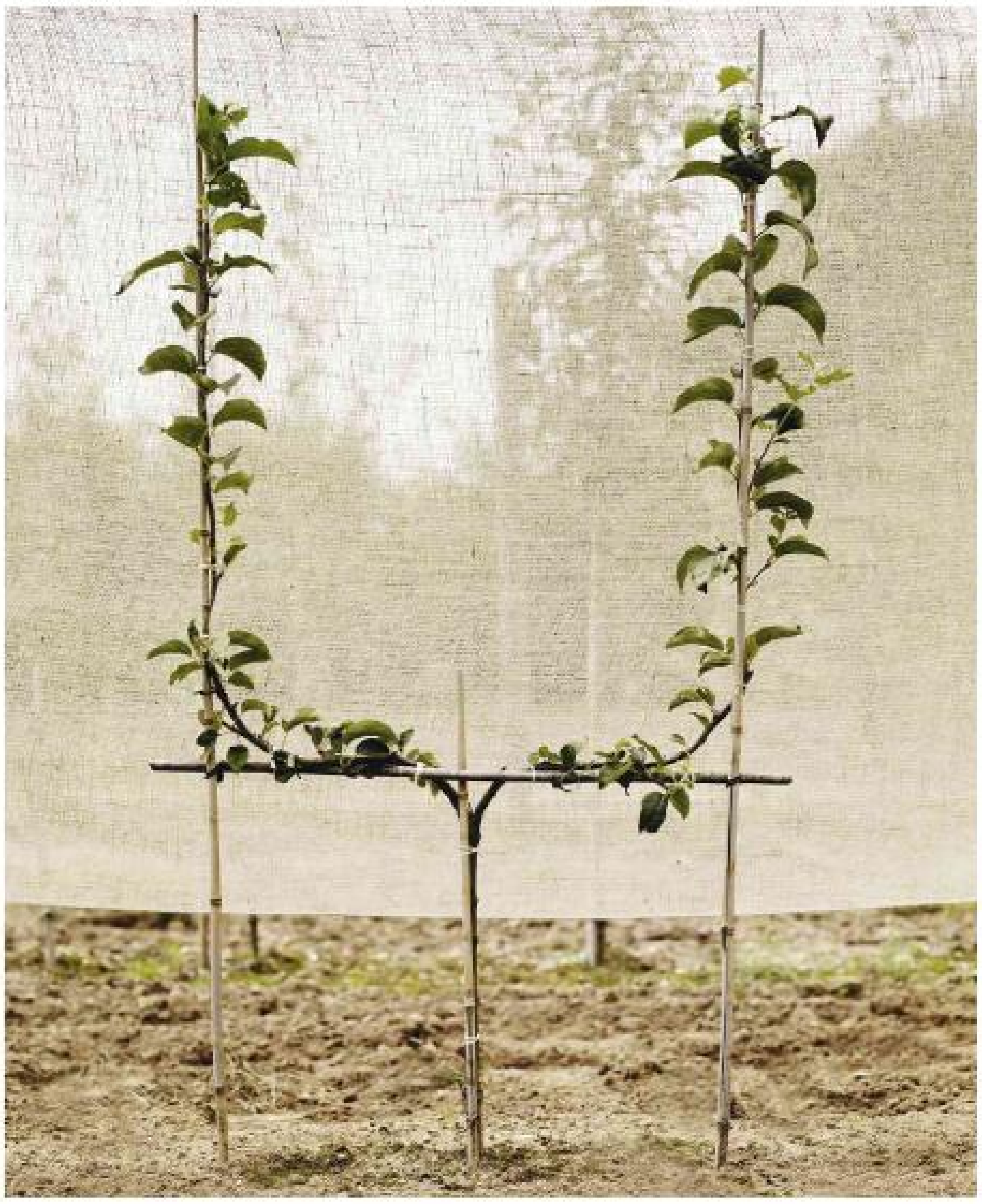
Tree shapes

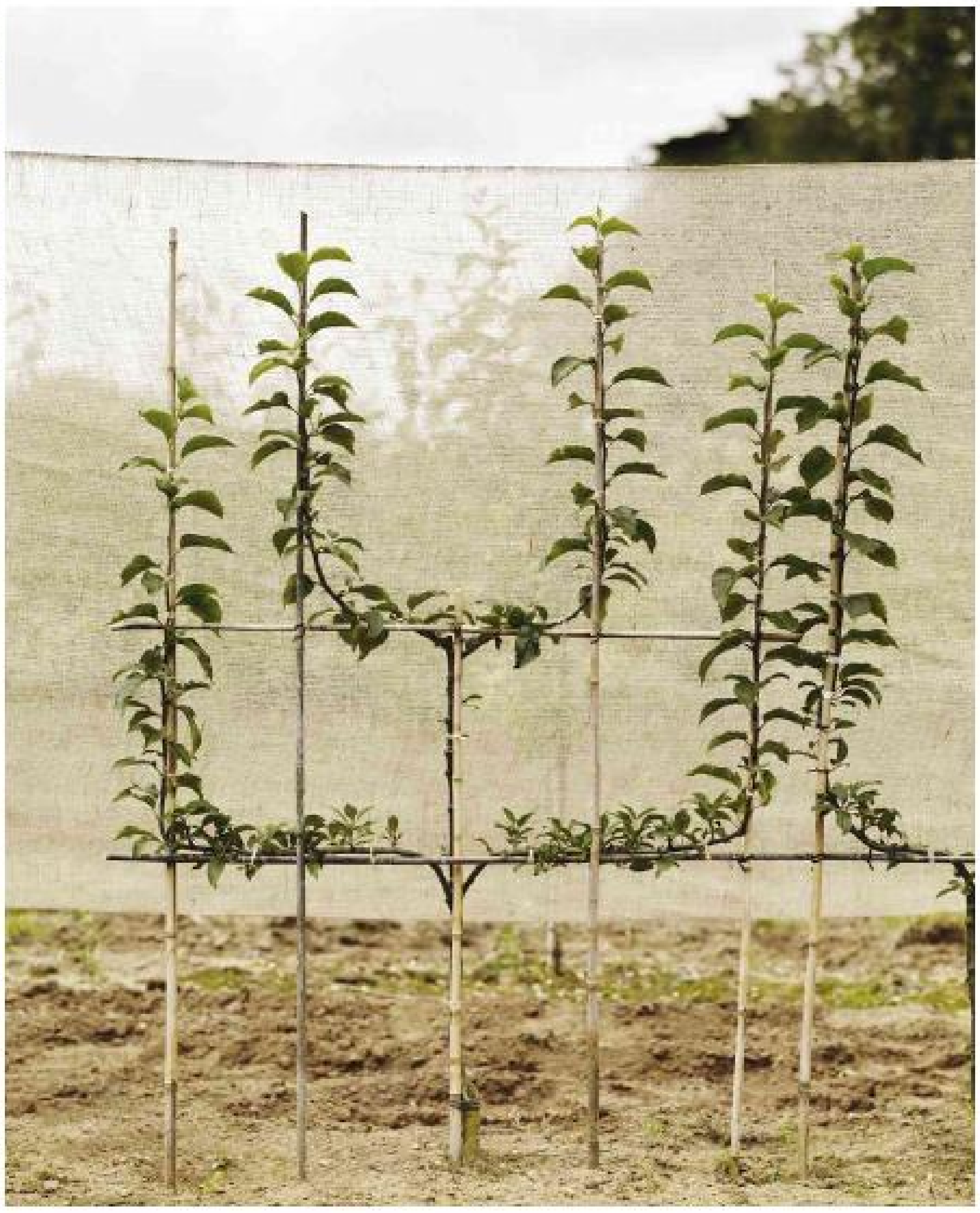
Double U-cordon

This takes a minimum of three years to form. "This is a good shape because you are breaking the vertical plane twice, each time halving the sap and slowing the whole tree down," says Chris. "There is less chance of one limb taking over, or of the whole thing going out of control."

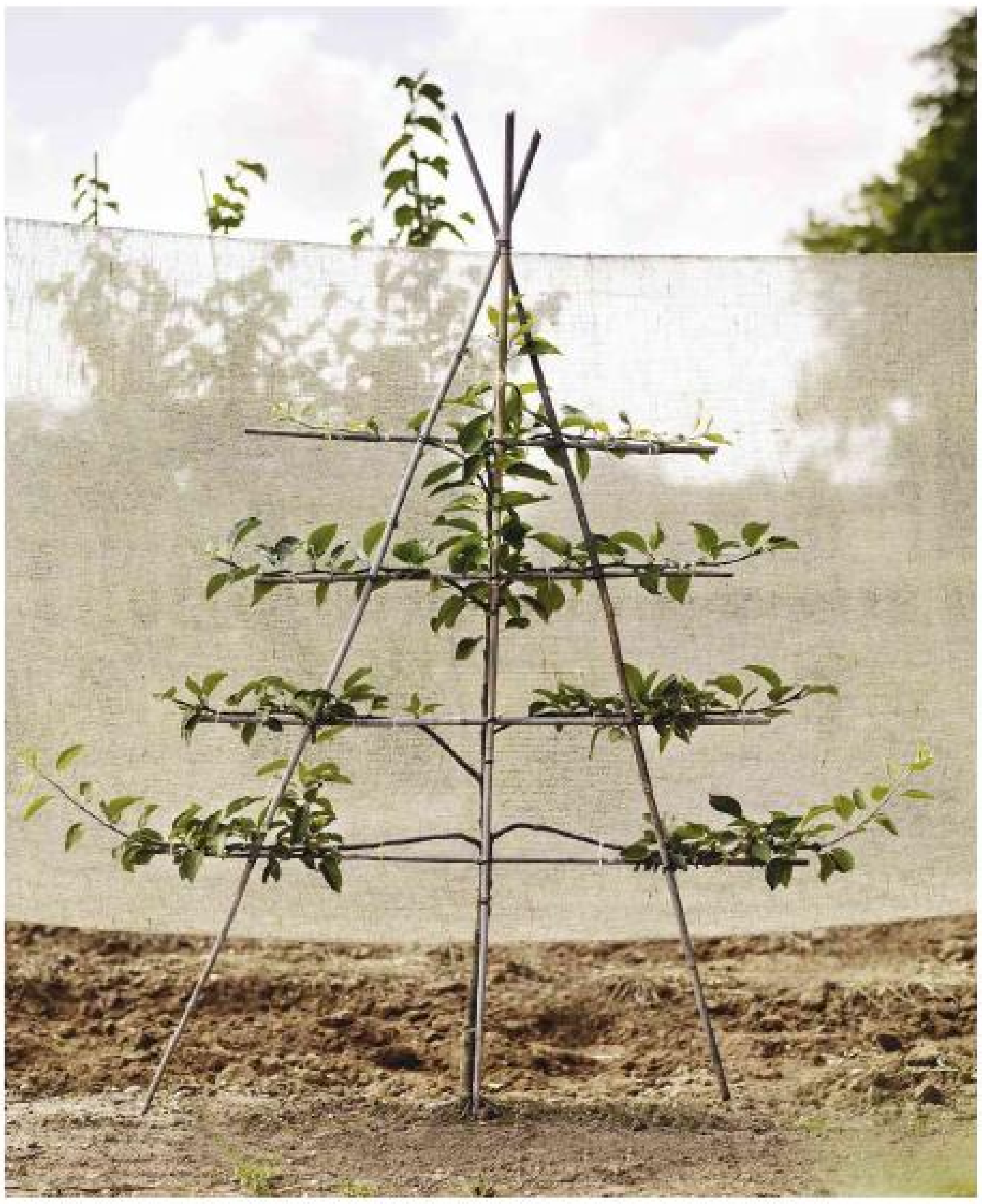




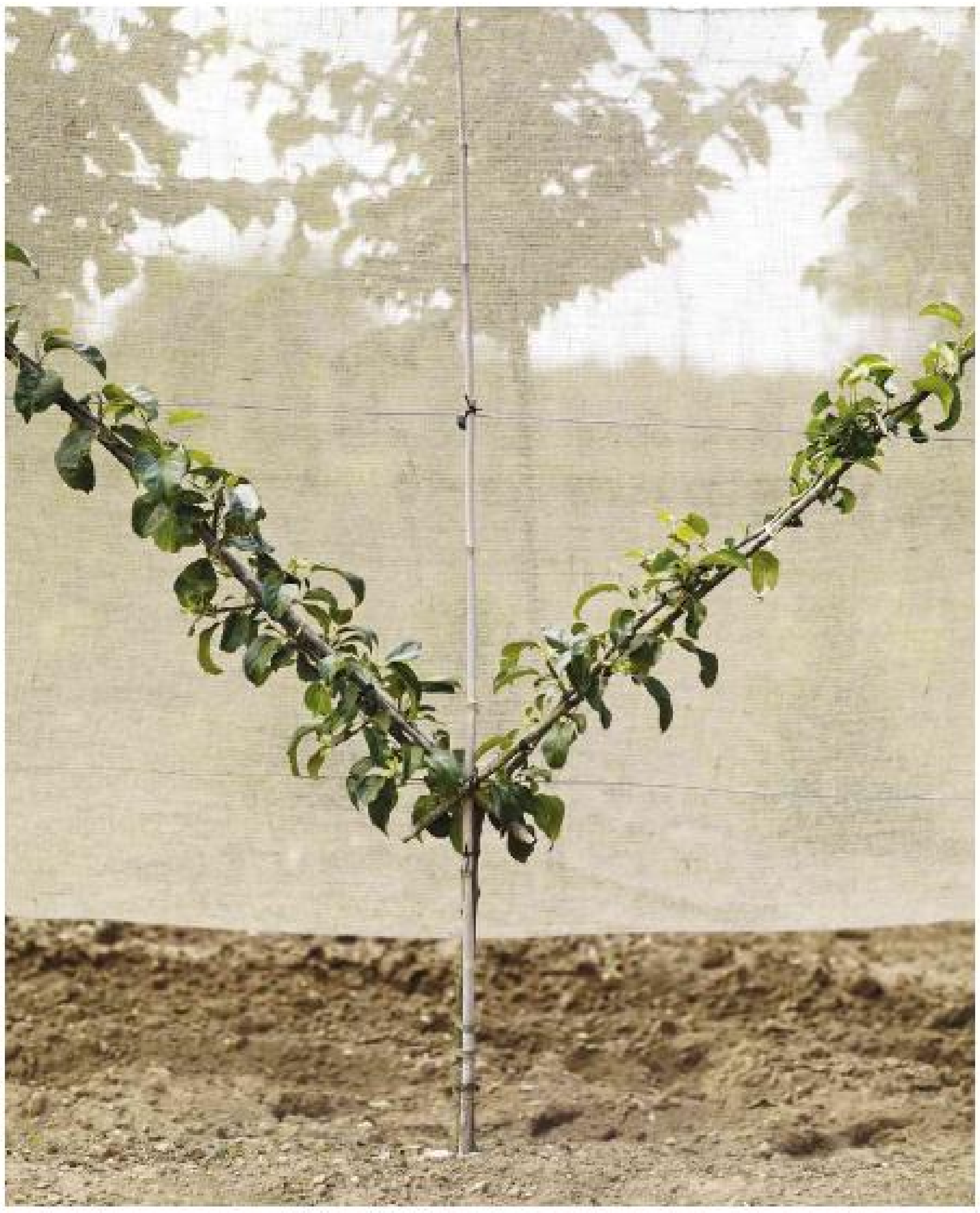
U-cordon
Two or three years. "A brilliant, simple shape. Great planted either side of a path and grown over to make a free-standing arch."



Palmette verrier
Minimum three years. "Here again the central stem is broken so it's a lovely, easily managed shape once it is set."



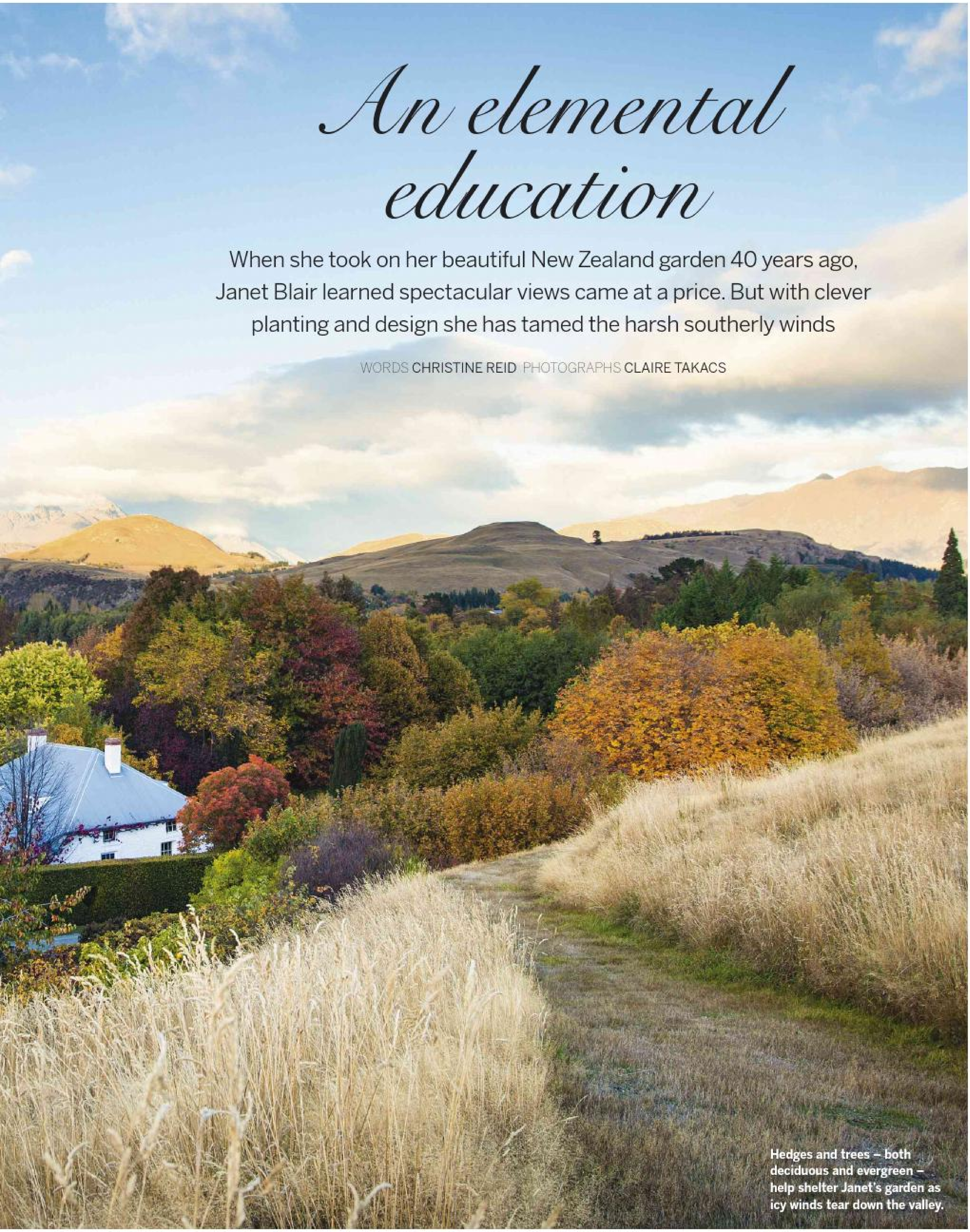
Espalier
Minimum three years. "The central stem and top level will naturally be stronger and often take over. Many older trees are left as a T-shape."



Belgian fence or croisillon
Minimum two years. "Plant a series of these in different cultivars to make a living fence. Where they cross they often form a natural graft."

In brief

What Large country garden.
Where Near Queenstown, New Zealand's South Island.
Size 14 acres.
Soil Mainly a thin layer of loam over clay.
Climate Extremes of weather; from low of -19°C in winter to mid 30°Cs in summer.
Points of interest The entire garden is Janet Blair's creation over the past 40 years, and the garden has been given a five-star rating by the New Zealand Gardens Trust as a garden of national significance.



An elemental education

When she took on her beautiful New Zealand garden 40 years ago, Janet Blair learned spectacular views came at a price. But with clever planting and design she has tamed the harsh southerly winds

WORDS **CHRISTINE REID** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLAIRE TAKACS**

Hedges and trees – both deciduous and evergreen – help shelter Janet's garden as icy winds tear down the valley.

"Gardening is really a partnership between nature and artifice"

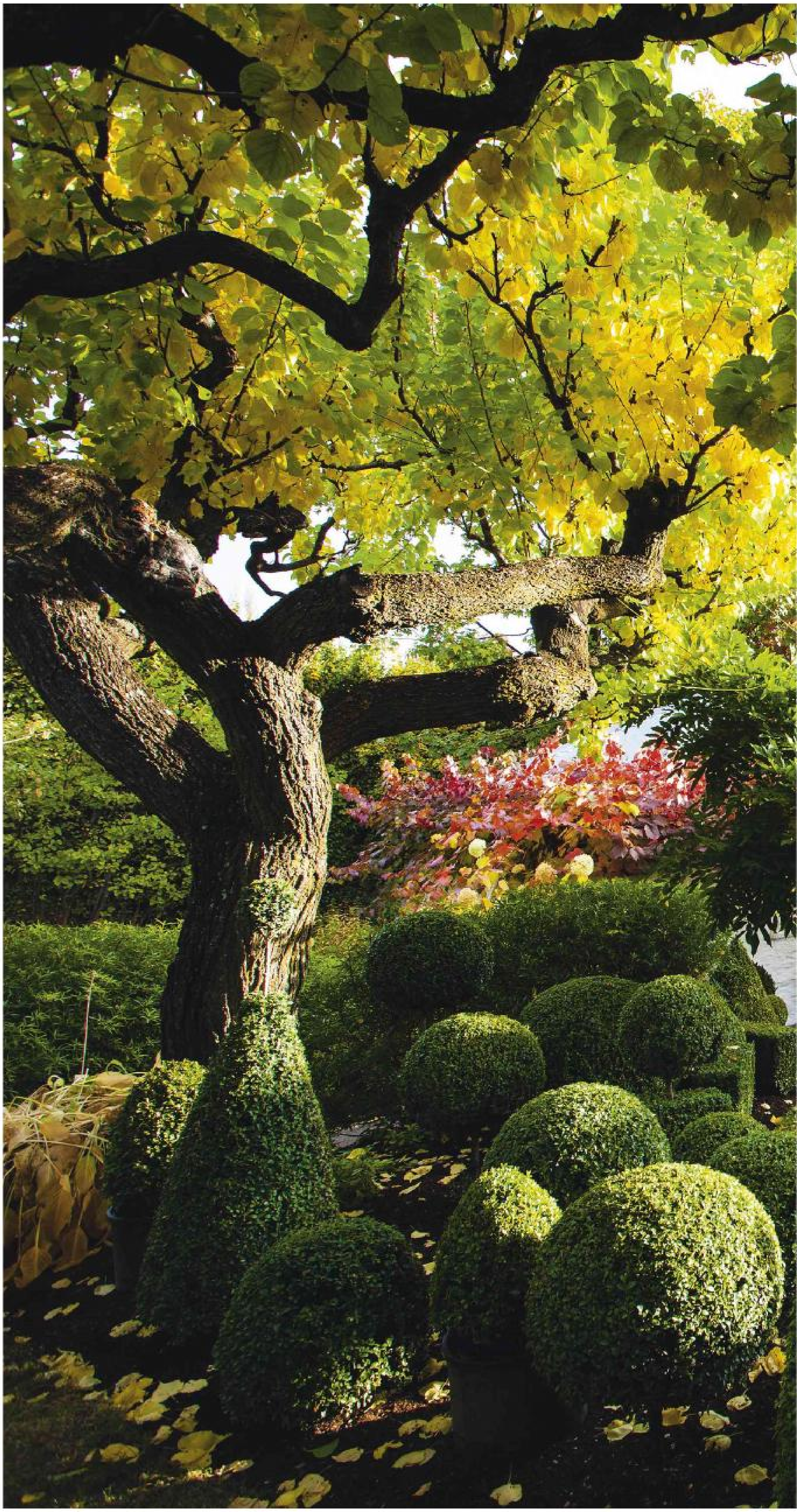
The influence of designer Russell Page's classic work *The Education of a Gardener* is undeniably far-reaching. Janet Blair, who gardens in the magnificent mountain scenery of New Zealand's South Island, rates it as the book that has inspired her garden making for the past 40 years. Her remarkable garden shows how much she has absorbed of this seminal text and Page's principles and rules.

'A panorama and a garden seen together distract from each other. One's interest is torn between the garden… and the excitement of the distant view… A view, too, usually means wind, and a windy garden is unrewarding,' writes Page. His words are remarkably relevant to Janet's garden and the challenges she faced in creating it, the first being how to retain the 'excitement of the distant view' and yet create a domestic-scale garden.

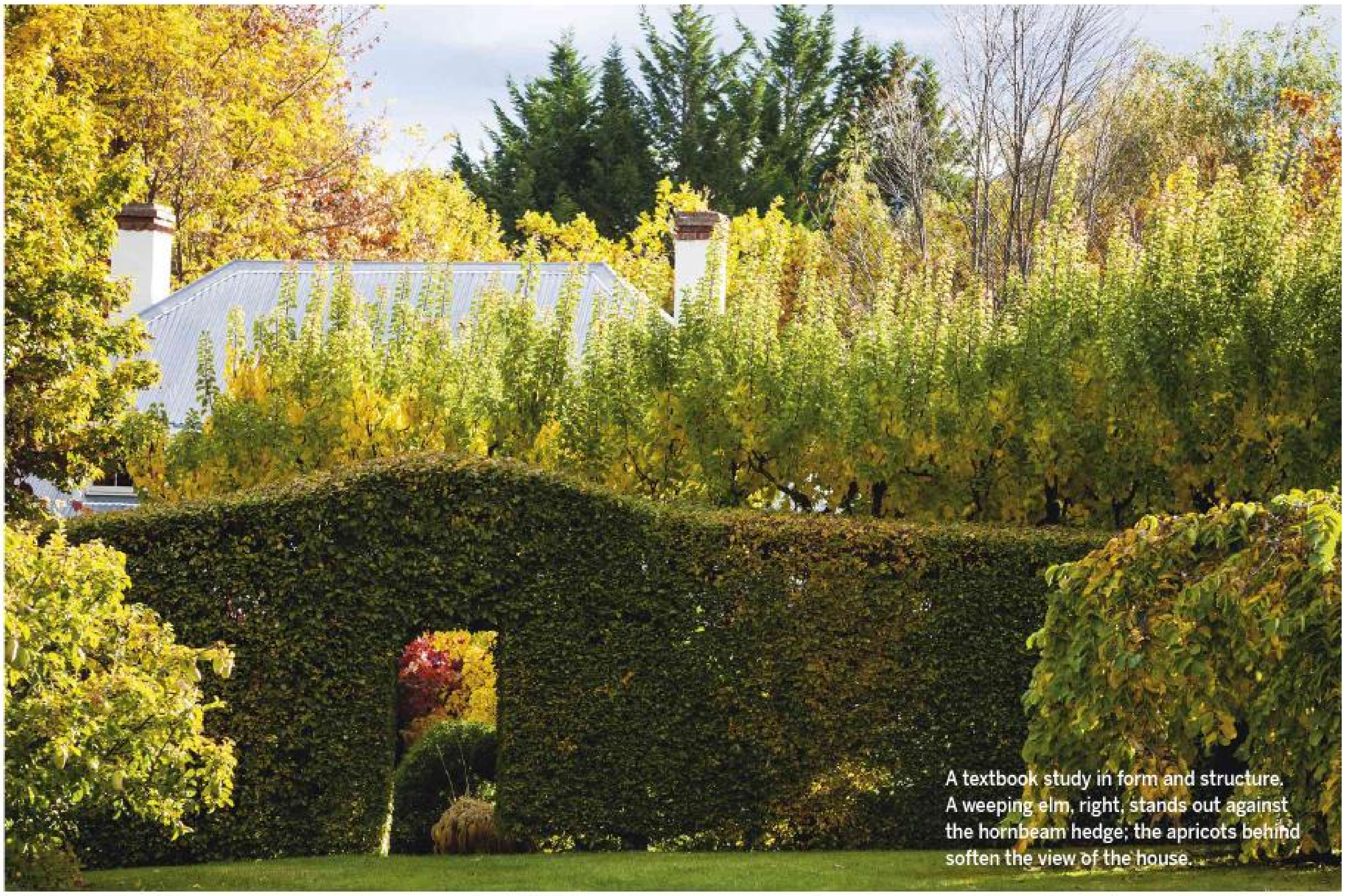
The snow-capped peaks and panoramic skyline are the background to the garden. Page comments: 'It is usually better to try and reduce the width of a view by planting it out so that from the house you see it only partially… it's best done by tree-planting of the simplest kind, using only one of two varieties; trees and hedges carefully placed near the house will be enough to make a frame and a foreground' – precisely what Janet has done.

The second challenge for her has been to ameliorate the effects of the wind. "The climate and site has really dictated the

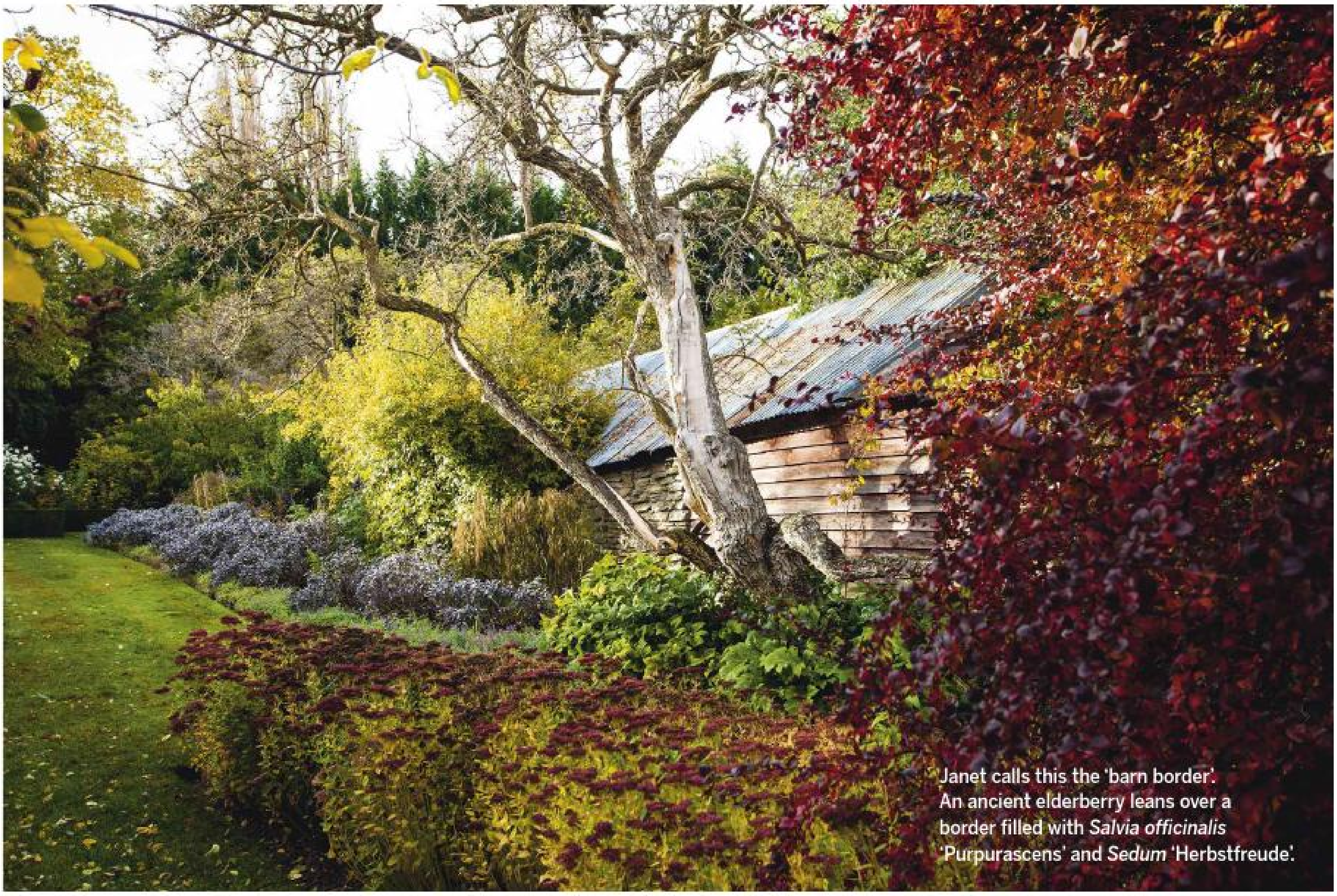
Continued on page 70 ▷



This intimate area near the house is especially beautiful in autumn. Golden leaves on the apricots, in the foreground, and two standard wisterias contrast with the red leaves of the ornamental grape vine and the green of the neatly clipped box.

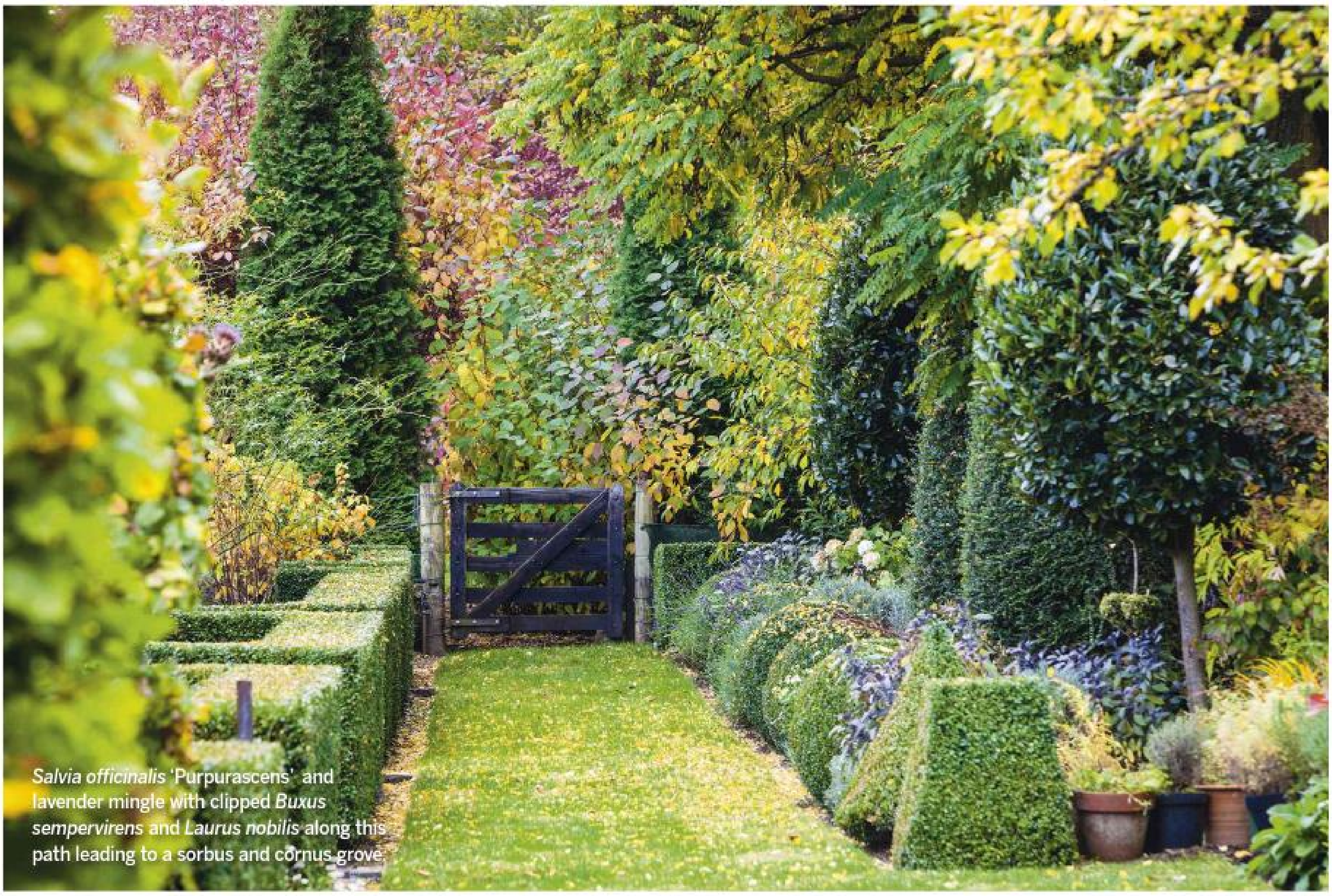


A textbook study in form and structure. A weeping elm, right, stands out against the hornbeam hedge; the apricots behind soften the view of the house.



Janet calls this the 'barn border'. An ancient elderberry leans over a border filled with *Salvia officinalis* 'Purpurascens' and *Sedum* 'Herbstfreude'.

A quiet, almost secret pathway runs between plantings of sorbus (right) and cornus (left). A gate at the end leads to the vegetable garden, pictured below.

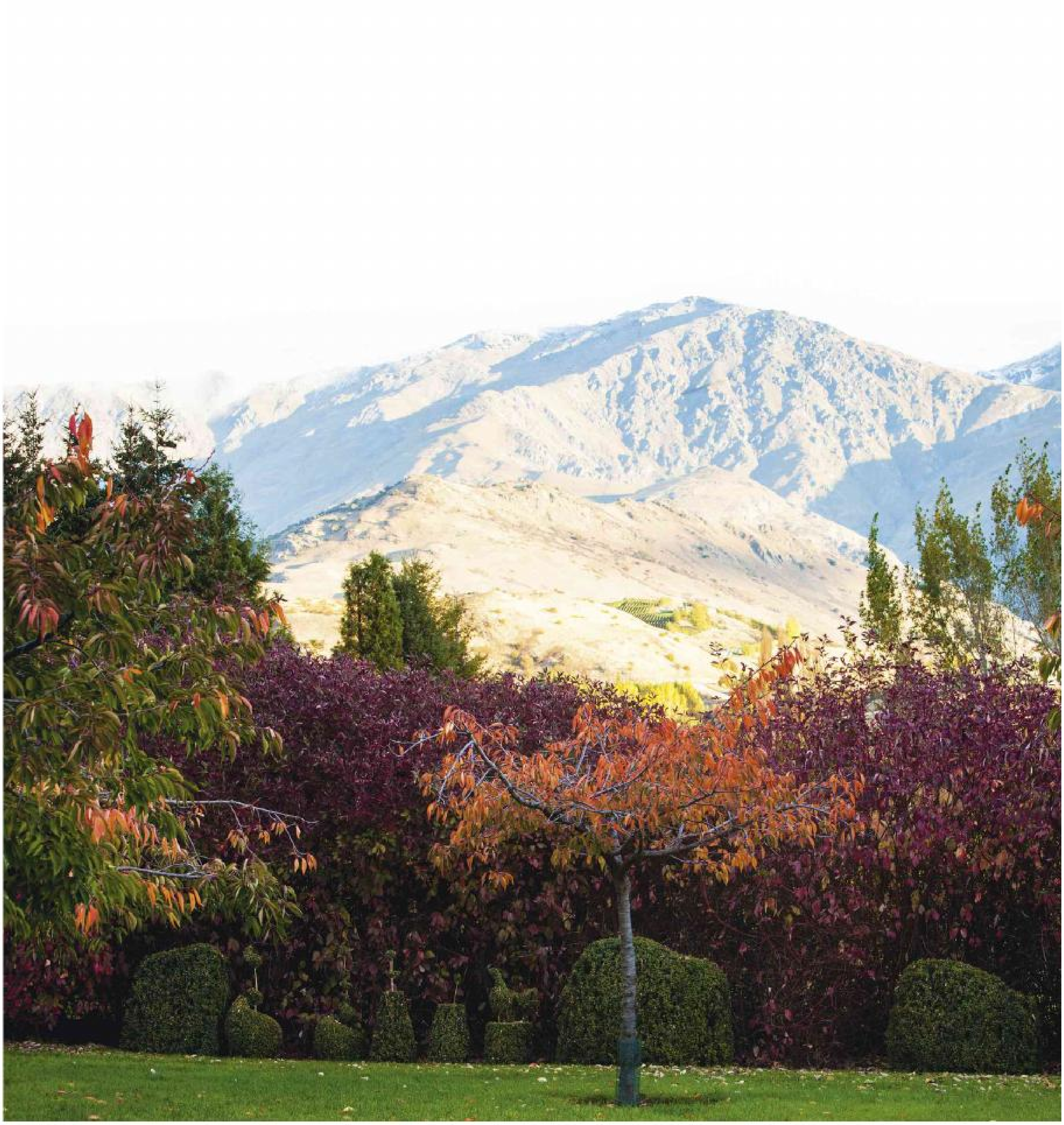


Salvia officinalis 'Purpurascens' and lavender mingle with clipped *Buxus sempervirens* and *Laurus nobilis* along this path leading to a sorbus and cornus grove.

The garden in the landscape

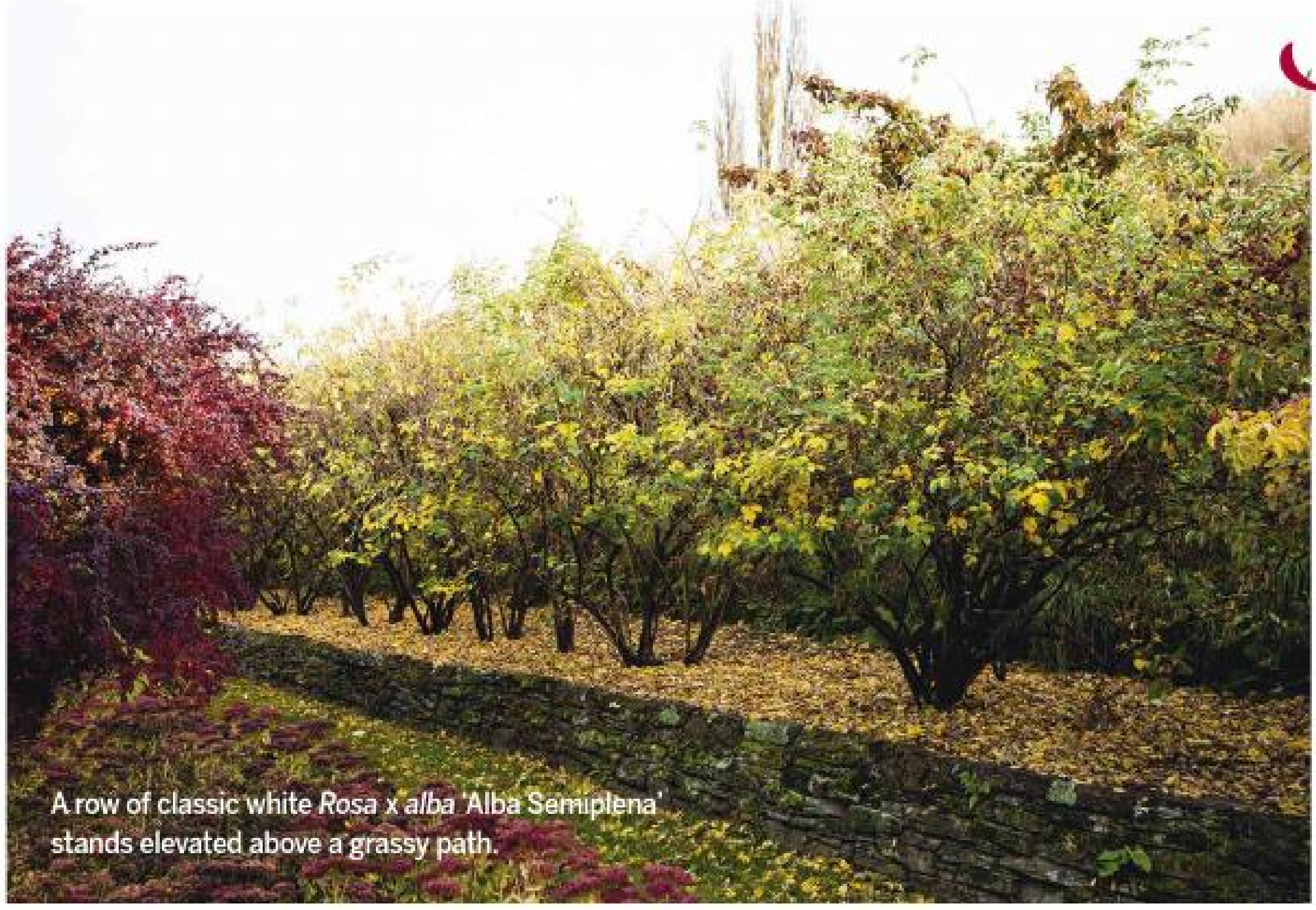
Janet and John Blair's garden is tucked away in a valley among the dramatic mountain scenery of New Zealand's South Island on a latitude of 45 degrees south. The property, on the main Lake Hayes to Arrowtown road, is slightly elevated and looks south to Lake Hayes; to the west are mountain ranges and in the south, the view is to the appropriately named mountain range, the Remarkables, with their sharp silhouettes on the skyline. To the north-west is Coronet Peak, one of New Zealand's premier ski fields. Arrowtown, a short distance away, was a gold mining village in the 19th century where many Irish settlers tried their luck.

When Janet and John found their stone cottage in this beautiful but wind-swept valley, there were no trees around the house. "Locomotive-force winds roared up from the south; there was no shelter, no shade and no birdsong," says Janet. "I wanted to live in beauty and so I set about creating a haven by planting trees."



Facing page: The mountainous background rises above *Prunus* 'Shirotae' on the lawn, while a topiary collection makes a whimsical foreground to colourful *Cornus alba* 'Sibirica'.

This page: A long vista from the vegetable garden where the precise lines of box hedging direct the eye to the magnificent view beyond.



A row of classic white *Rosa x alba* 'Alba Semiplena' stands elevated above a grassy path.

> *"I wanted to live in beauty, and so I set about creating a haven by planting trees"*

▷ garden I've made. John and I found this stone house – it was built in 1864 – and three generations of an Irish family had worked it as a farm. I used to find Clydesdale horseshoes in the soil. There were no trees, only some cotton and Lombardy poplars on the periphery of the property. What I wanted to do was make a garden for the family – to have some shelter from the wind, some summer shade and attract birds."

A further challenge to future garden-making was the lack of a reliable water supply – surprising when you see all that snow around. "I had to bucket water to every new plant. I can say truthfully that I have planned, dug and planted everything in the garden. I was young and fit!" Janet says.

Today tall trees frame the view and temper the wind's force. Along the driveway are horse chestnuts and ash trees, their leaves colouring superbly before they fall. Sorbus form a line of brilliant colour in the autumn days, their white berries "like pearls of the garden", says Janet. All comes together as a harmonious entity with ribbons of green hedging binding the garden together.

Those most valuable of all garden plants – box and yew – Janet uses to great effect. In the early days of the garden, Janet set aside an entire paddock just to have a propagation area for hedge making. Now there are lines of crisply cut angular hedges in box, beech and hornbeam. However, any slight tendency to bulkiness is dispelled by Janet's playfulness with beds of topiary. Twirls, spires, balls, cones – even a topiary pack of cards can be found in the vegetable garden. "I've broken a few rules along the way, too – not all my box hedges are low, some of them are higher than the average person," she says. "I do have a leaning towards the formal garden but I have found ways to create a more relaxed look such as a serpentine hedge and clipped topiary."

Flowers remain relatively few. 'Iceberg' roses, lilacs and lilies; purple spikes of a favourite salvia appear on the long walk to the vegetable garden. "Generally I've planted perennials with blue and misty blue flowers to acknowledge the landscape. At evening the colours are beautifully complementary to the light on the mountains," Janet says.

"The wind will always be a problem – the southerlies and westerlies steam up the valley and recently we lost huge limbs from weeping willows and an ancient cotton poplar. It's saddening when trees come smashing down on a neatly clipped hedge. Gardening is really a partnership between nature and artifice. It's an ever-changing pursuit. I aim for serenity and simplicity but there's only one body and one pair of hands!" □

9 of Janet's key plant choices

1 *Cornus alba* 'Sibirica'
Wonderful at every stage; the crimson stems grow without coppicing. It's most spectacular in winter surrounded by snow. 1.5-2.5m. AGM[*]. RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b[†].

2 *Rosa* Iceberg (= 'Korbin')
Renowned for its free-flowering habit and disease-free foliage, this delicate, sweet-scented rose was first bred in Germany in 1958 and is now grown worldwide. 50cm-1m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-9a.

3 *Parthenocissus tricuspidata* 'Veitchii'
This Boston ivy is especially glorious in autumn climbing around a window. Over 12m. AGM. USDA 4a-8b.

4 *Rosa* x *alba* 'Alba Semiplena'
One of the oldest roses, this White Rose of York flowers only once with a strong and sweet perfume but rewards in autumn with glorious hips. 1.5-2.5m. AGM. RHS H7.

5 *Salvia officinalis* 'Purpurascens'
This purple sage has shades of blue-grey as it ages. 50cm-1m. AGM. RHS H5.

6 *Berberis thunbergii* f. *atropurpurea*
This tough shrub, with fierce spines has glorious autumn colour. Easy to grow in most soil types. 1-1.5m. RHS H4.

7 *Sorbus cashmiriana*
Enchanting with its little white berries; they are like white pearls. 4-8m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a.

8 *Viburnum plicatum* f. *tomentosum* 'Mariesii'
Outstanding flowers with its widely spreading branches and vibrant shades in autumn. Unusually, it's shown here with autumn colour and flowering at the same time. Probably due to changing/unseasonal weather. 3m. AGM. USDA 5b-9a.

9 *Amelanchier lamarckii*
Charming in spring with white flowers and fused with striking red leaves in autumn. 6-9m. AGM. RHS H6,

[*] Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
[†] Hardiness ratings given where available.

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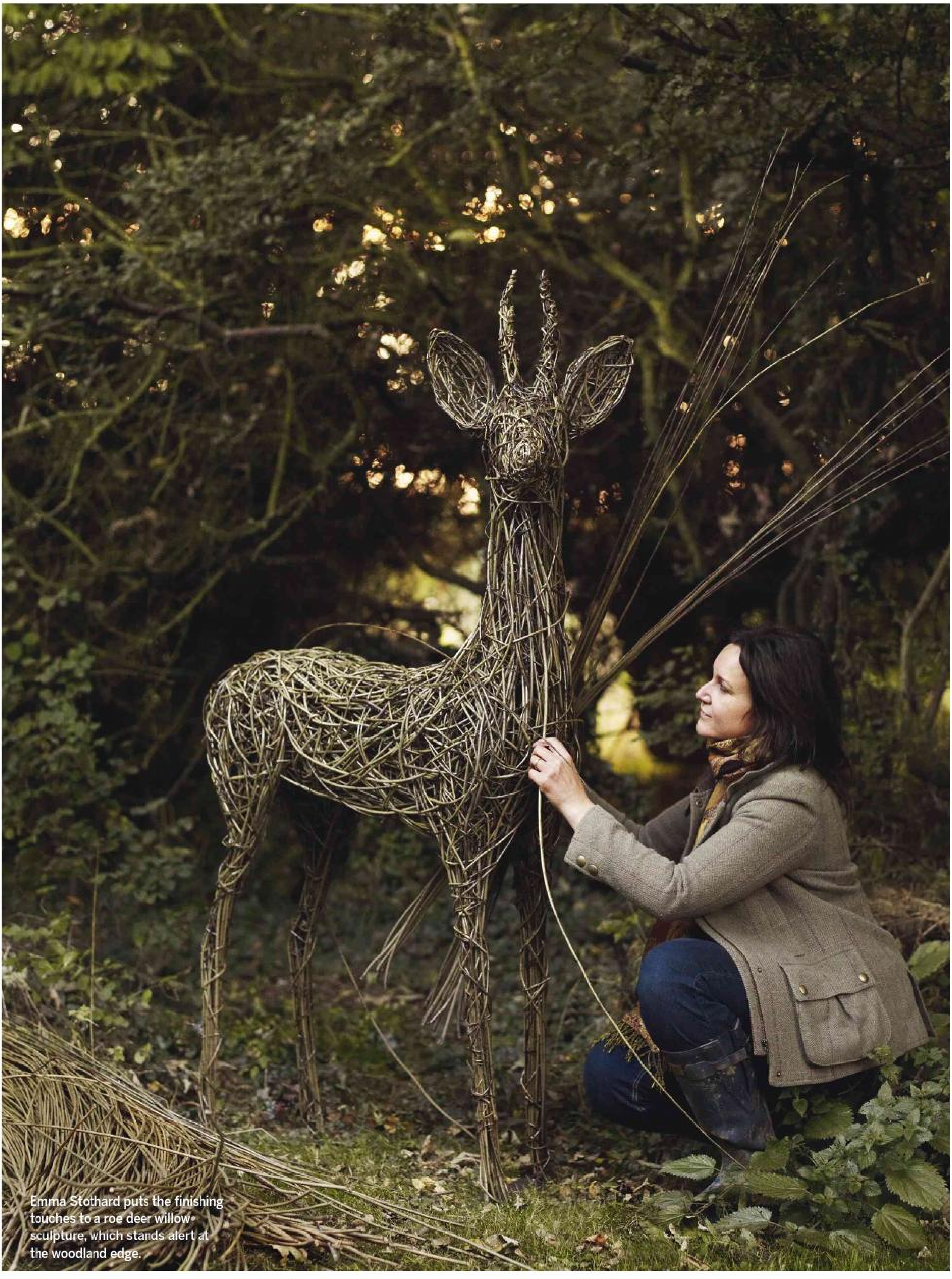
Animal magic

Using coppiced Somerset willow to breathe life into her animal sculptures, Emma Stothard is enchanting a growing body of fans – including the Prince of Wales

WORDS **ANNIE GATTI** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**



Emma Stothard puts the finishing touches to a roe deer willow sculpture, which stands alert at the woodland edge.

So far, 2013 has been a cracking good year for Yorkshire-born sculptor Emma Stothard. Her woven sculptures and structures featured on two gardens at the Chelsea Flower Show. In Gloucestershire a quartet of her willow Rare Breed animals took up residence on the Orchard Lawn at Highgrove Gardens (joining her 2006 willow sculpture of Tigga, Prince Charles's much loved Jack Russell), while over in Oxfordshire her monumental Limousin bull is the first thing visitors arriving by helicopter at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons encounter. The bull – a 2.7m-long beauty she had studied up close at a farm near her home outside Whitby – took Emma six weeks to complete. But this month she will be putting the finishing touches to an even bigger commission: two life-size mares and foals, one pair in willow, the other in galvanised wire, for Singapore's Gardens by the Bay, which is celebrating the Chinese Year of the Horse in 2014.

Coincidentally, Emma remembers the first drawing she did at school was of a horse. Her love of drawing led to a Fine Arts degree at Southampton but she also threw herself into farm work during the vacations. She had done metalwork for her degree but it was a friend who gave her the idea of sculpting with willow. "I loved the idea of growing, coppicing and then using it," she says. She headed down to Somerset to learn from the experts at English Hurdle. Here she met Serena de la Hey, creator of the 12m-high *Willow Man* next to the M5 motorway. "I saw her working in a contemporary way with willow and she inspired me."

Back in Yorkshire, where Emma took a job as an art teacher, she used chickenwire for the frames of her first animals – pigs, cockerels, geese. A stand at the Harrogate Flower Show kickstarted her commissions, and from 2001, when she received a start-up grant from the Prince's Trust, she juggled her sculpting with helping her husband Rob to run their award-winning seafood restaurant: Green's of Whitby. As she became more skilled, and more ambitious, she tackled larger animals, such as deer, and wove each sculpture around a steel armature, which ensures sturdier finished pieces.

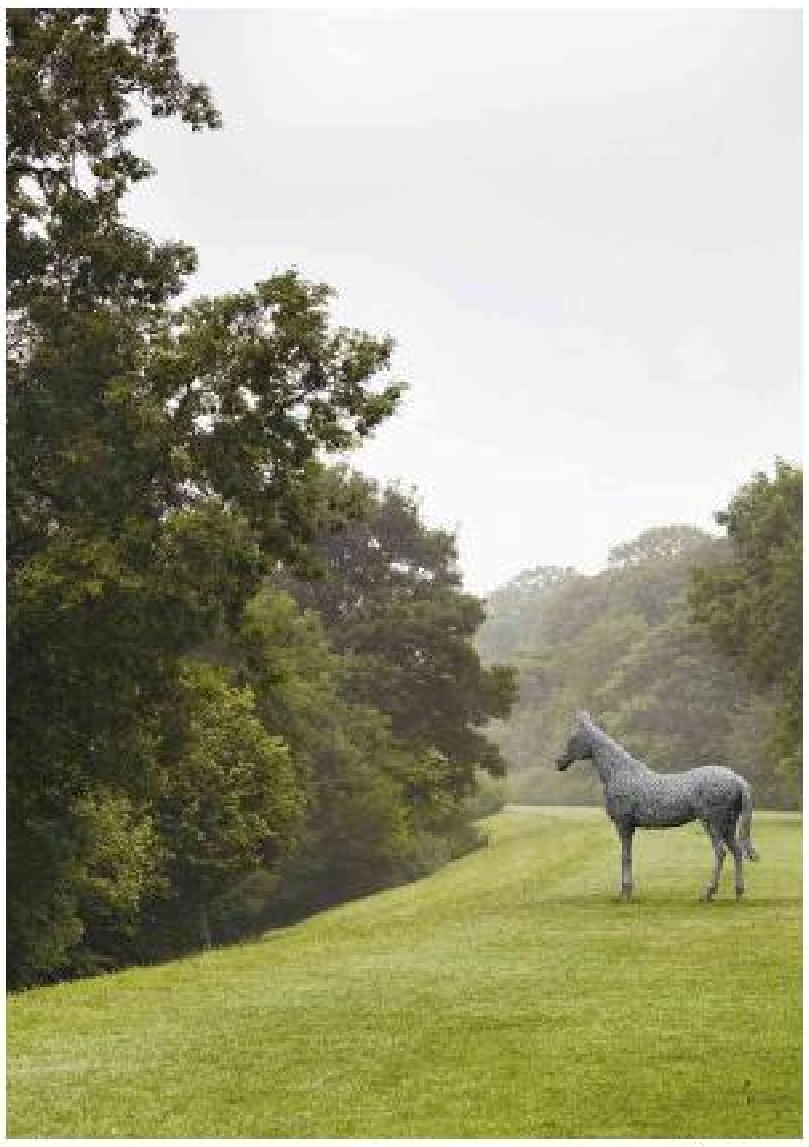
By 2009 she was a full-time sculptor. Her workshop – an echoing, hangar-like building on a small industrial estate – is large enough to house several horse and deer armatures, plus the bundles of Somerset-grown willow in different thicknesses and shades that she will soak for up to three weeks to make them flexible enough to weave. To the untrained eye, the armatures, which she welds from mild steel herself, look like stick figures but to Emma they are the critical starting point. "This armature," she says pointing to a stick goose clamped to a vice "has got to say it's a goose." She likens the weaving to making a 3D drawing, and with a few flowing movements she loops a length of willow several times around the steel rods and already the bird's breast is emerging. By the end of the day it's a waddling goose, head held high, beak defined with a few strands of 6mm wire. Across the room a pair of alert roe deer, their ears forward, are waiting to be finished off with a protective spray of linseed oil and turpentine. Willow sculptures need protection if they're to be exposed to the elements. Emma recommends spraying each piece at least four times a year with a 50/50 mixture of linseed oil and turpentine and, if possible, sheltering it inside over winter. With a little love they can last for up to ten years, and the linseed oil gives them the rich sheen that is the hallmark of all Emma's willow pieces.

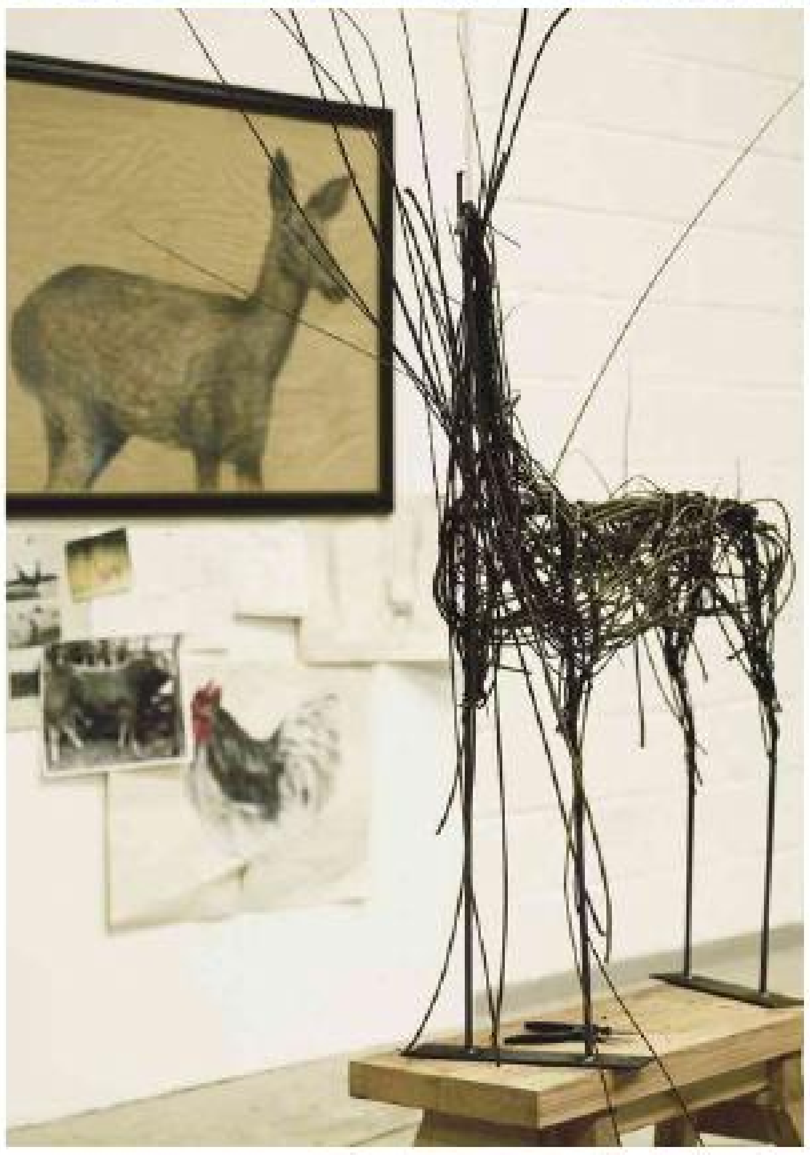
USEFUL INFORMATION

Website emmastothard.com **Tel** 07715 585671 **Email** sculpture@emmastothard.com

Emma's work can be seen at Highgrove and Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons and, until 4 November, at the Yorkshire National Trust properties at Nunnington Hall and Rievaulx Terrace and Temples. Her Rare Breeds animals (Irish moiled cow, Gloucestershire Old Spots, Cotswold sheep, pheasants and hens) can be ordered through highgroveshop.com

Prices start at £800 for a willow fawn and £1,500 for a galvanised wire one.





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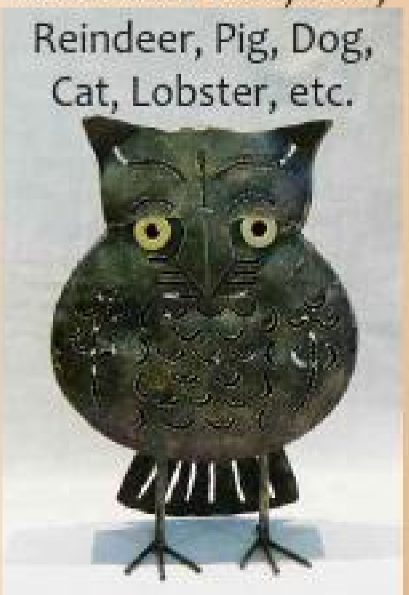
Candle Lanterns with a small tray inside for a tea light candle. Christmas Tree, Owl, Reindeer, Pig, Dog, Cat, Lobster, etc.



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COME TO THE BACK DOOR
PLEASE SHUT THE GATE
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SHED
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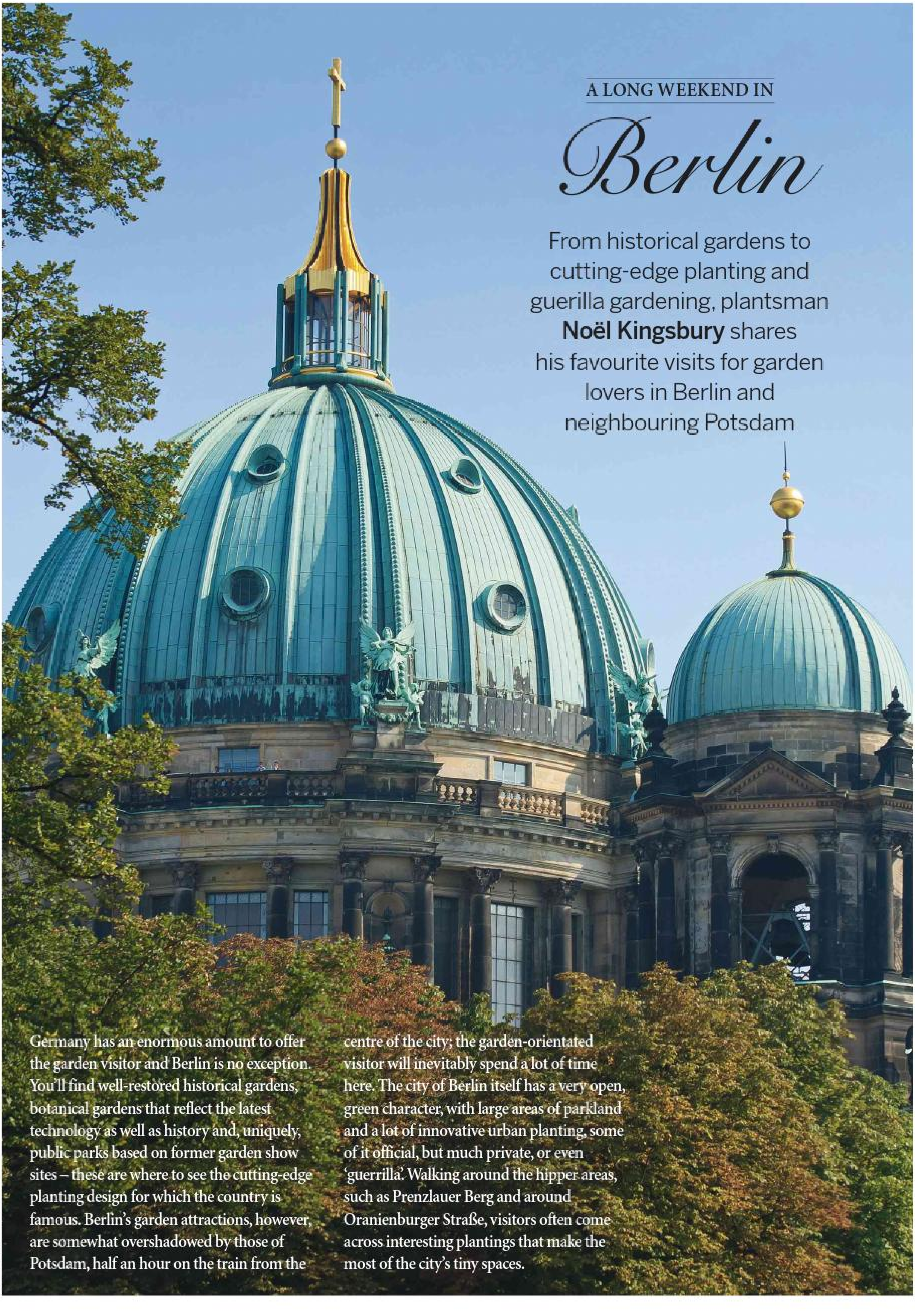

JANUSZ GNIADEK / ALAMY

A LONG WEEKEND IN

Berlin

From historical gardens to cutting-edge planting and guerilla gardening, plantsman **Noël Kingsbury** shares his favourite visits for garden lovers in Berlin and neighbouring Potsdam

Germany has an enormous amount to offer the garden visitor and Berlin is no exception. You'll find well-restored historical gardens, botanical gardens that reflect the latest technology as well as history and, uniquely, public parks based on former garden show sites – these are where to see the cutting-edge planting design for which the country is famous. Berlin's garden attractions, however, are somewhat overshadowed by those of Potsdam, half an hour on the train from the centre of the city; the garden-orientated visitor will inevitably spend a lot of time here. The city of Berlin itself has a very open, green character, with large areas of parkland and a lot of innovative urban planting, some of it official, but much private, or even 'guerrilla'. Walking around the hipper areas, such as Prenzlauer Berg and around Oranienburger Straße, visitors often come across interesting plantings that make the most of the city's tiny spaces.

Gardens to visit in and around Berlin

Berlin has so many gardens that visiting them all would take weeks, but if you have just a few days, here's a small selection of the city's best

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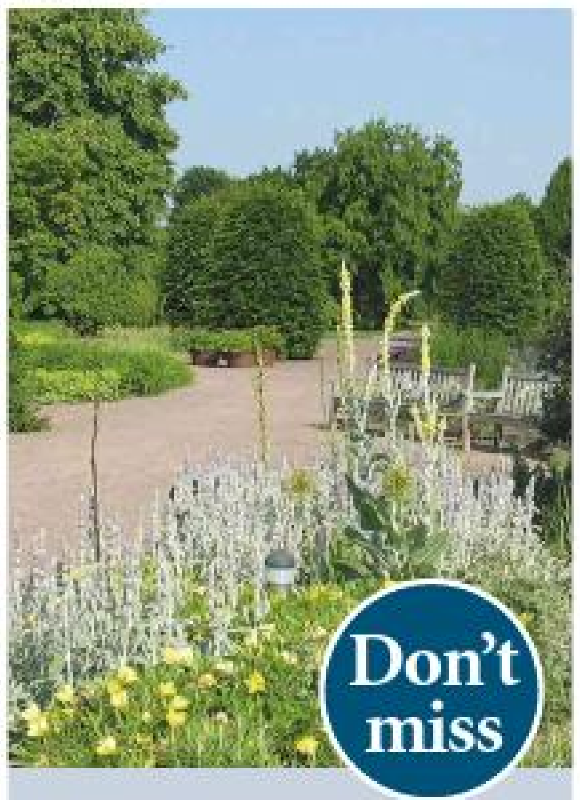

❻ KARL FOERSTER GARTEN

Foerster (1874–1970) was one of the most influential gardeners of the 20th century. In this, his own garden, Foerster wanted to 'do the planting as if it were on a stage'. Central to the garden is a sunken area – modelled on historic English gardens. Microclimates support a range of plants and further areas concentrate interest for spring and autumn. There is also a rock garden, trials area and extensive nursery.

Website foerster-stauden.de
Address Am Raubfang 6, 14469 Potsdam-Bornim.
Tel +49 (0)331 520 294.
Open Daily 9am to dusk, free. Garden not wheelchair friendly.

❶ BRITZER GARTEN

Created around a large lake for a 1985 garden show, this 100-acre site features a variety of gardens, with roses, ecologically based areas, drifts of perennials and a Witch Garden with medicinal and 'magical' plants. Spring's tulip festival and autumn's mass dahlia planting get crowded, but usually this is a quiet place to see good planting.

Website britzer-garten.de
Address Mohriner Allee, 12349 Berlin.
Tel +49 (0)30 700 9060.
Open Daily, 9am to dusk, entry €3. Accessible for wheelchairs.

❷ FREUNDSCHAFTSINSEL

'Friendship Island' in the river near central Potsdam has extensive plantings of grasses and perennials, with many cultivars bred by Karl Foerster, who was involved in the original 1930s layout. Foerster (who sheltered Jewish colleagues in the Second World War), helped remodel the park under East German communist rule; sculptures of workers (including a gardener) are a reminder of the regime's gentler face. A superb public garden whose mission is to inspire private gardeners.

Website freundschaftsinsel-potsdam.de
Address Lange Brücke, 14467 Potsdam.
Tel +49 (0)331 200 8016.
Open Daily dawn to dusk, free.

❸ BOTANIC GARDENS OF BERLIN-DAHLEM

One of the world's great botanic gardens with 18,000 plant varieties, habitat plantings, exotic bedding, tropical glasshouses and moorland gardens, this 300-year-old garden combines historic and contemporary perspectives on the human relationship with plants. One section shows plant communities as if in their native environment, so visitors can walk through, for example, a North American area, complete with trees, shrubs and perennials. It was famously here that Brazilian garden designer Roberto Burle Marx first appreciated the glory of his country's own flora.

Website botanischer-garten-berlin.de
Address Königin-Luise-Straße, 14195 Berlin.
Tel +49 (0)30 838 5010.
Open Daily 9am to dusk, entry €6. Part wheelchair accessible.

❹ PARK WÖRLITZ

'The finest of all English landscape gardens' a garden historian once said of Wörlitz. About an hour and a half from central Berlin, this UNESCO World Heritage site is a vast landscape of parkland, follies and trees, full of interest, yet tranquil. Created in the second half of the 18th century, this was the garden-kingdom of the progressive Prince Franz von Anhalt-Dessau, whose love of landscaping nature was acquired on a visit to England. Since re-unification of East and West Germany, the follies and garden structures have been restored. It is fascinating at any time, but superb in autumn for the trees.

Website gartenreich.com/en/index.html
Address Kulturstiftung DessauWörlitz, Schloss Großkühnau, 06846 Dessau-Roßlau.
Tel +49 (0)34 064 6150.
Open Daily dawn to dusk. Entrance to the park is free, combined ticket to buildings €12.

❺ SANSSOUCI

One of several palaces of Potsdam's Park Landscape, Sanssouci Palace is Germany's Versailles, but more intimate, made for Frederick the Great in the 18th century. Seasonal bedding, more inventive than that seen in Britain or the USA, lines some of the allées. A 'Sicilian garden' is planted with exotics, a Nordic garden with conifers and there is a Roman-themed garden. Buildings of architectural importance include a Chinoiserie tea house. All elements are linked by skilful landscaping, carried out in the 19th century by renowned designer Peter Joseph Lenné.

Website spsg.de/Palaces_and_Gardens.html
Address Sanssouci Palace, Maulbeerallee, 14469 Potsdam.
Tel +49 (0)331 969 4200.
Open Daily (except mondays). Park landscape free, with charges for the various buildings. Part wheelchair accessible.

1&6 GRÜN BERLIN; 2 STEFFEN HAUSER / BOTANIKFOTO / ALAMY; 3 I. HAAS, BOTANISCHER GARTEN UND BOTANISCHES MUSEUM BERLIN-DAHLEM; 4 BILDARCHIV MONHEIM GMBH; 5 KLAUS AND DIRK LEHNARTZ, BOTH FROM GERMAN NATIONAL TOURIST BOARD/ MAYER

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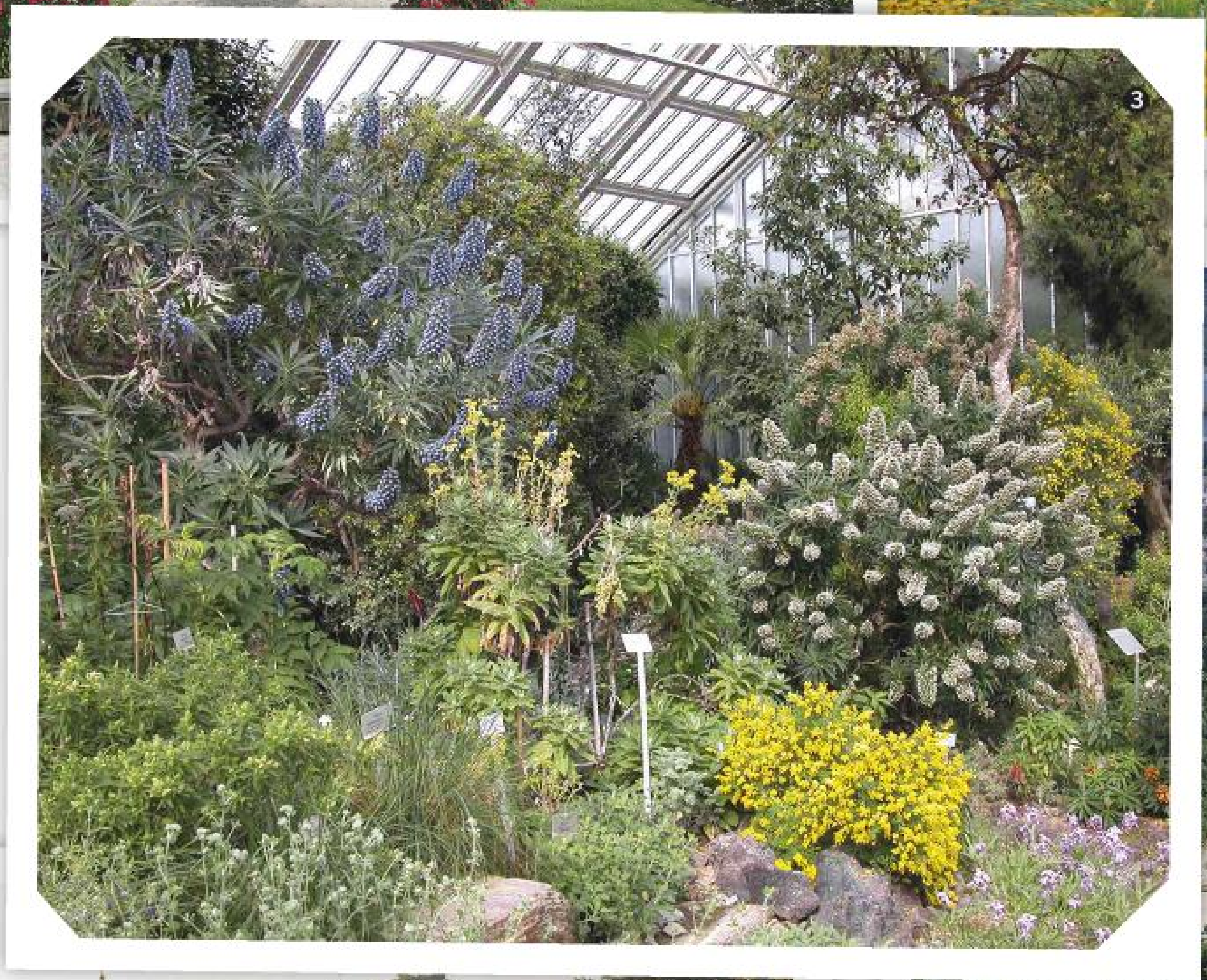
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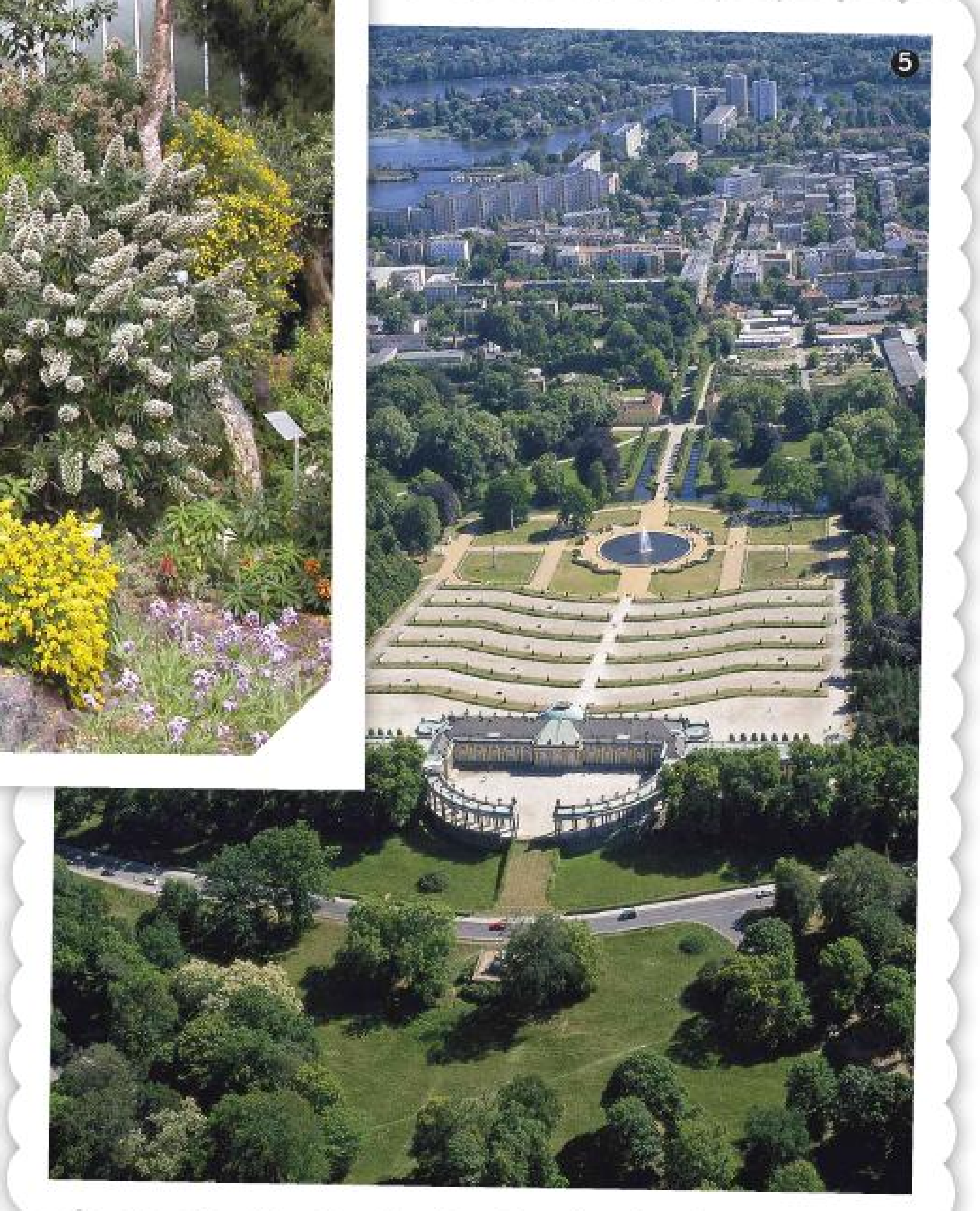
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Other places to visit

Enjoy some garden-themed shopping and seek out the city's wildlife gardens and alternative green spaces

Prinzessinnengärten

Liebermann Villa

The **Königliche Gartenakademie** (koenigliche-gartenakademie.de) is the latest and most elegant place to buy plants and garden accessories, with a café and small display garden. Set up by two garden designers who used to have a practice in Britain, it is determinedly Anglophile.

For those interested in the city's wilder side, **Natur-Park Schöneberger Südgelände** (bi-suedgelaende.de) is a must, an internationally renowned and good example of post-industrial regeneration that is characteristically German. Nature has been allowed to take over an old railway yard; there is a rich variety of species, with good interpretation.

Very typical of Berlin is direct citizen action to reclaim abandoned land, including the **Prinzessinnengärten** (prinzessinnengarten.net) and the extraordinary developments at the old **Tempelhof Airport** site, where large numbers of 'horticultural squatters' have moved in, covering the site in raised beds made of scrap wood.

Art lovers should head to the **Liebermann Villa** (liebermann-villa.de/en). Max Liebermann was an early 20th-century figurative painter who was part of a liberal artistic circle that was very influential in planting design. The villa has a small permanent collection, puts on exhibitions and has a newly restored garden, with both permanent planting and summer bedding in historically inspired styles.

Nothing green, but an extraordinarily powerful 'landscape as memorial' is the **Holocaust-Mahnmal**, a group of memorials to the Jewish, homosexual and gypsy victims of Nazi Germany (holocaust-mahnmal.de), including the impressive Field of Stelae designed by Peter Eisenman, as well as an information centre.

Berlin's secret gardens

A number of private gardens are open to the public on an occasional basis in summer – see offene-gaerten-berlin-umland.de. If you have friends or relatives in Berlin, try to find someone who can unlock the gate to a district of *Kleingärten*, the city secret rarely shared with tourists. These are the local equivalent of allotments, except that as well as vegetables and fruit, they often feature little cottages to stay at the weekend, with borders, lawns, swimming pools and a wide range of plant life. They are where many Berliners, who mostly live in flats, come to relax, garden and gossip. A tour around what are often very extensive areas will reveal an extraordinary range of garden styles, and – perhaps the real heart of popular garden culture there – many gnomes. Gnomes are German in origin and are modelled on the costume of German-speaking miners who in previous centuries worked mines across eastern Europe.

Need to know

WHEN TO GO

Winter is always long and cold, while summer can be surprisingly hot. May and June are very pleasant, but for gardens, September to early October is best.

HOW TO GET THERE

Berlin is easily reached with budget airlines including Easyjet (easyjet.com) and German Wings (germanwings.com). The Deutsche Bahn website (bahn.com) can be searched in English for rail links with the rest of Europe.

FIND OUT MORE

The map: *Gartenkarte: Gärten und Parks in Brandenburg, Berlin und Potsdam* (€4 from terra-press.de) is a guide to 150 parks and public gardens in the city and surrounding countryside. A PDF leaflet *Prussian Palaces and Gardens in Berlin and in Brandenburg* can be downloaded at spsg.de/media/de/SPSG_Infoflyer-en.pdf

MARCO CLAUSEN/PRINZESSINNENGARTEN; MAX LIEBERMANN SOCIETY; INTERFOTO / ALAMY

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WEBSITE **qualitygardentools.com**

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For something a little different, take a look at the Plant Belles range of elegant rustic metal plant supports. The grow-through 'Belles', are both practical and beautiful, used in National Trust and RHS gardens (pictured here at Rosemoor), designed and handcrafted in the UK.

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design

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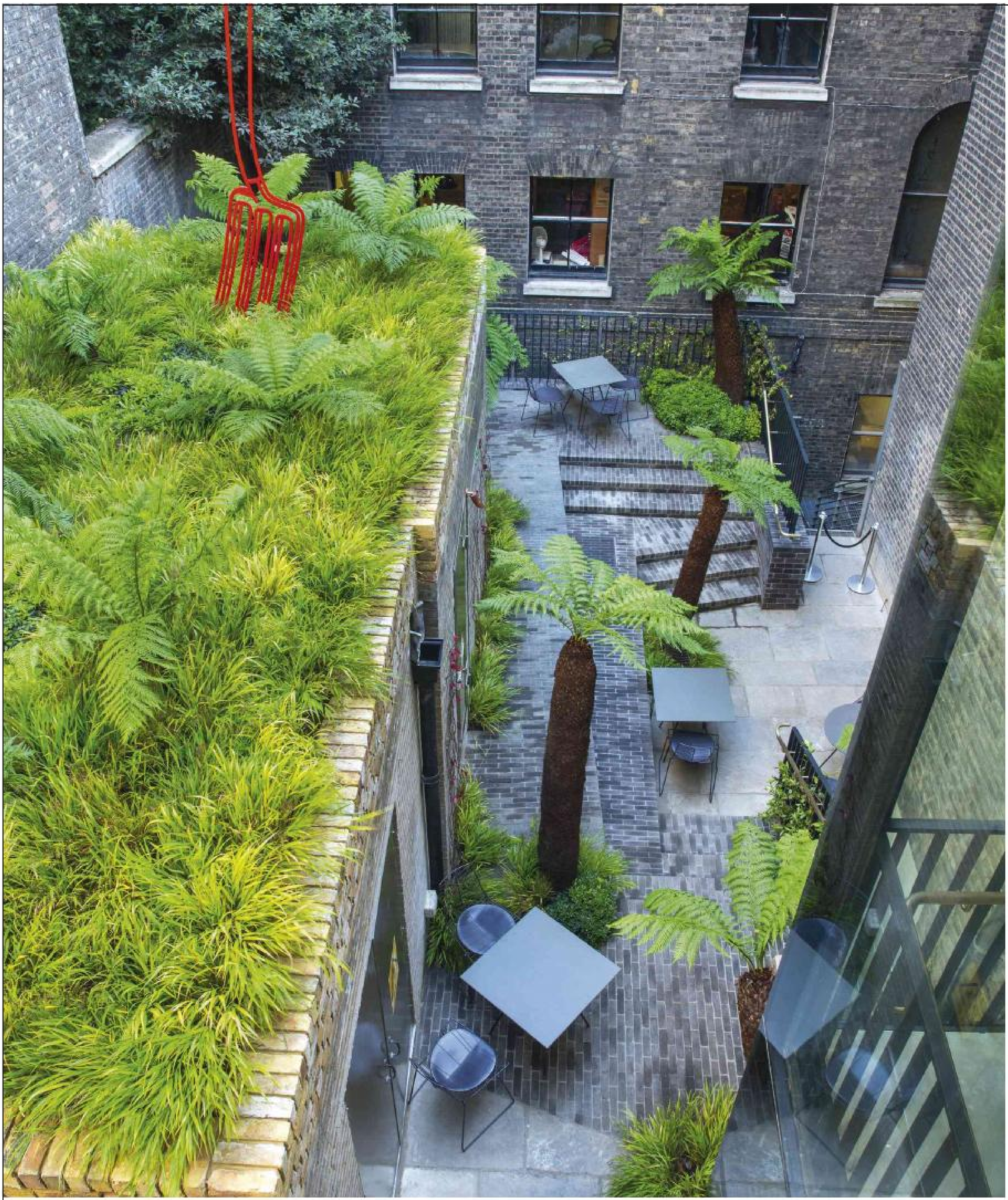
NEWS COMPILED BY ANNIE GATTI

Urban design

Users of the gleaming new Library of Birmingham can step out on to two large garden terraces – landscaped by the building's designers, Netherlands-based Mecanoo – and immerse themselves in beautiful flowerbeds filled with aromatic plants, edible plants and species that attract insects and birds. The shape of the planters on the third-floor Discovery Terrace was inspired by knot gardens and the interlocking metal rings on the facade of the library. The seventh-floor Secret Garden has denser planting with a canopy of multi-stem trees and buddlejas. libraryofbirmingham.com

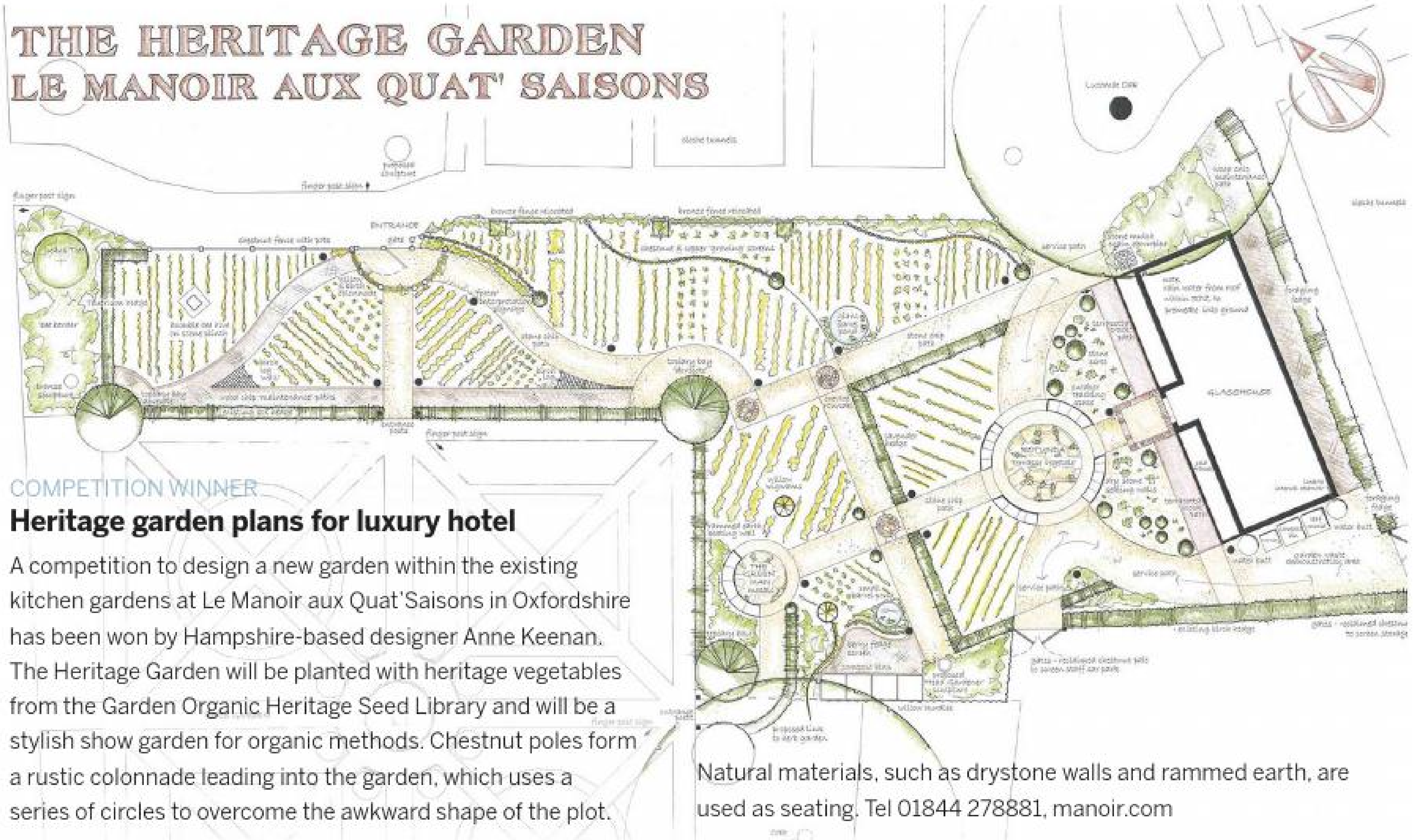
CHRISTIAN RICHTERS



NEW GARDEN

Tom Stuart-Smith at the Royal Academy

In the heart of the Royal Academy in London's Piccadilly is a secret, sunken courtyard garden designed this summer by Tom Stuart-Smith and installed by Crocus in time for the opening of the newly restored Keeper's House, designed by Long & Kentish. Layers of green from Australian tree ferns *Dicksonia antarctica*, *Pittosporum tobira* 'Nana', *Hakonechloa macra* and *Trachelospermum jasminoides* create a calm oasis, while Virginia creepers on the brick walls provide a fiery autumn backdrop. Above, the flat roof of the adjoining electricity substation is carpeted in lush green foliage. The garden and house, which has an Oliver Peyton restaurant and bar, are open exclusively to Friends of the Royal Academy until 4pm. The public can visit after 4pm. Tel 020 7300 5920; keepershouse.org.uk



COMPETITION WINNER

Heritage garden plans for luxury hotel

A competition to design a new garden within the existing kitchen gardens at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons in Oxfordshire has been won by Hampshire-based designer Anne Keenan. The Heritage Garden will be planted with heritage vegetables from the Garden Organic Heritage Seed Library and will be a stylish show garden for organic methods. Chestnut poles form a rustic colonnade leading into the garden, which uses a series of circles to overcome the awkward shape of the plot. Natural materials, such as drystone walls and rammed earth, are used as seating. Tel 01844 278881, manoir.com

OAK BENCHES

Charred oak seating makes a bold statement. Shropshire furniture maker Chris Nangle uses locally sourced native green oak, which needs no treatments and is maintenance free, for his distinctive benches. This pierced seat is one of his new designs and comes with an elliptical or circular cut-out. 1.2m long, from £920.

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LINEAR PARK PLANS

Green corridor planned for New York

The first step in transforming a 3.5-mile-long stretch of abandoned railway line tracks, bridges and embankments in Queens, New York, into a green corridor has been taken with the appointment of WXY Architecture + Urban Design and DLANDSTUDIO to lead a feasibility study. Community groups and local residents will be consulted before designs are drawn up.

MARIANNE MAJERUS – THE KEEPER'S HOUSE, ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS / DESIGN: TOM STUART-SMITH, ANNE KEENAN, WXY & DLAND

GARDEN SHOW WINNER

Hanging gardens of... Sydney

At the inaugural Australian Garden Show held at Centennial Park in Sydney in September, the Best in Show and People's Choice awards were given to Australian designer and broadcaster Brendan Moar for his first-ever show garden, 'Suspended'. Hanging plants drove the contemporary design, hovering about a central pool to create strong vertical lines.

GREEN WALLS

Paris and London go vertical

Patrick Blanc's most recent vertical garden cloaks a graffiti-covered building at the corner of Rue d'Aboukir and Rue des Petits Carreaux in Paris in bands of greens, yellows and red. It took just seven weeks to install and was unveiled during Paris Design Week. In London, the UK's largest green wall, shown here, was designed by Green Roof Consultancy. It covers 350 square metres of the facade of The Rubens at the Palace Hotel, Victoria, with an astonishing 10,000 plants, many of them species that will attract pollinators to the heart of the capital.

Notebook

- **A November visit to Gresgarth Hall**, the Lancashire garden of landscape designer Arabella Lennox-Boyd, offers a chance to admire its autumn hues and to see trees and shrubs planted in rhythms of shape, form and colour. The garden will be open to the public on 10 November, 11am-3pm. arabellalennoxboyd.com
- **Johanna Gibbons and Neil Davidson** of J&L Gibbons talk about recent projects their award-winning London practice has undertaken, including Making Space in Dalston and their winning entry for the Vauxhall Missing Link competition. 'Grounds for Optimism: Designing Resilient Landscapes in London' at Garden Museum, 6 November, 6.30-8pm. Tel 020 7401 8865, gardenmuseum.org.uk
- **Sussex-based landscape designer** Caspian Robertson's design for an edible garden, 'A La Carte', which won gold and Best in Show at RHS Malvern last year also won Best in Show at the Moscow Flower Show this summer. The show had some 50 participants from Russia, Europe and the USA.
- **The ASLA EXPO**, which takes place on 16-17 November during the annual meeting of ASLA (American Society of Landscape Architects) in Boston, will be attended by more than 500 exhibitors, making it the largest landscape design trade show in the USA. See asla.org/2013meeting/ for further details.

BRENDAN MOAR JOSLIN HARTLEY LOOK FRESH PHOTOGRAPHY

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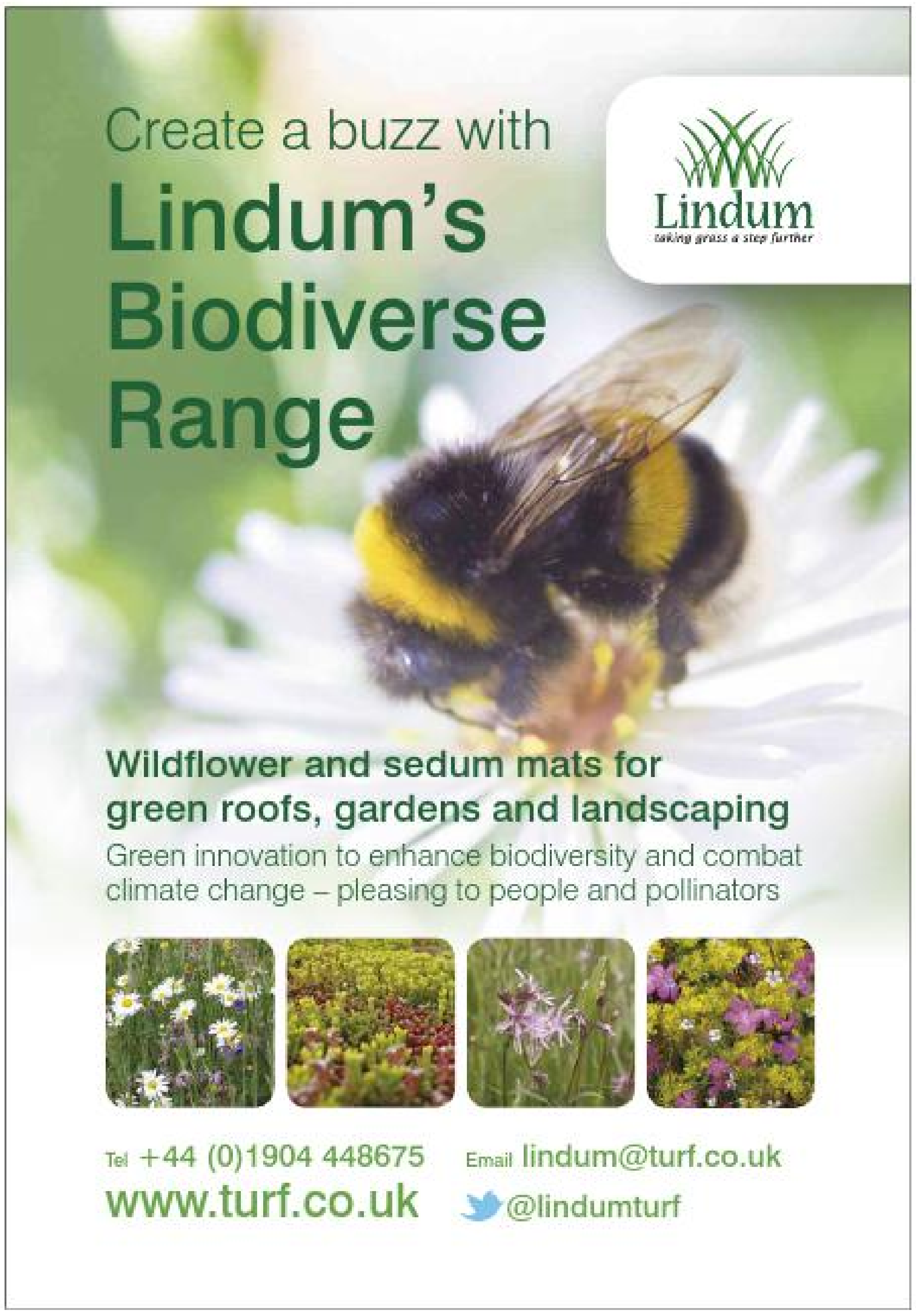
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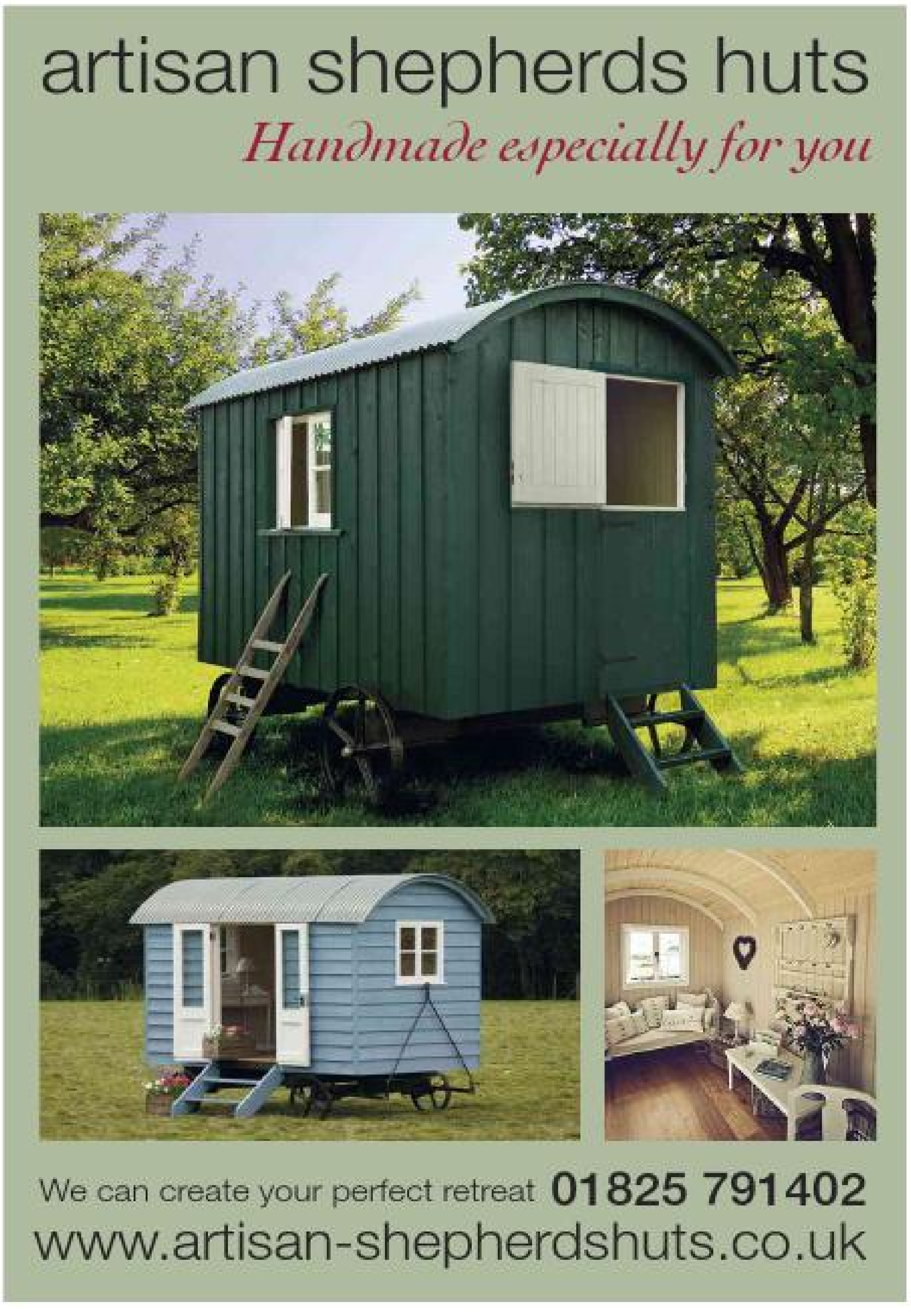
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Size does matter

But there are still plenty of clever designer tricks you can use to make even the smallest of gardens seem a lot bigger than it actually is

WORDS **ANNIE GUILFOYLE**

Annie Guilfoyle is Director of Garden Design at KLC School of Design. She is also Garden Course Co-ordinator at West Dean College and runs her own garden design studio.

Designing small gardens can be somewhat challenging. There is no doubt that you have to be extremely creative in the way you make best use of the space. The design has to be deceptively simple. It is an interesting process that requires rigorous editing of your ideas. Sometimes having constraints and limitations can actually be beneficial, and help you to produce a stronger design.

It does mean that each element you include must work much harder than it would in a large garden. If possible try to double up on how things function. For example, seating can be designed to incorporate storage for tools, toys or cushions. An archway with climbing plants could be combined with a children's swing. Railings or handrails can be designed to have sculptural interest and they become more than just a practical feature.

I employ a variety of design techniques to make small gardens appear larger. Setting the layout of the garden at an angle of 45 degrees to the house, helps to accentuate the width and takes the emphasis off the rear boundary. An angular layout will not only look dynamic but also produces more interesting shapes for planting areas. Smaller units of paving such as stone setts or brick pavers are preferable to large slabs; when laid, the paved area will appear more spacious.

Planting with muted colours, such as soft pastels, helps to increase the sense of space. Brighter, bolder colours tend to 'leap out' visually and will foreshorten the garden. The same theory applies to the texture of foliage. Finely textured leaves, such as *Artemisia* will recede into the distance, where as the brassy, bold leaves of a *Fatsia* demand attention and advance towards you. Of course, if it's drama you want, then use bright colours and bold textures but they are best suited to a larger garden.

Blurring the boundaries is another effective way of disguising the size of a garden. Structural shrubs and climbers are useful for concealing fences and I sometimes position a wall or hedge inside the boundary, with a path leading off behind it. This crafty, visual device suggests that the garden continues on beyond. Even in a small garden it is worth trying to divide up the space to create a journey, adding a sense of mystery and intrigue. Even though this technique is generally associated with larger gardens, it works equally well in a small one.

NEXT MONTH STORAGE SOLUTIONS

Top tips

1 Keep it simple – remember that less is more.

2 Can you double up on functions? Could the seat also become storage?

3 Use softer colours to achieve a sense of space.

4 Use small units of paving to make the garden appear larger.

5 Position the layout of the garden at an angle to maximise the space.

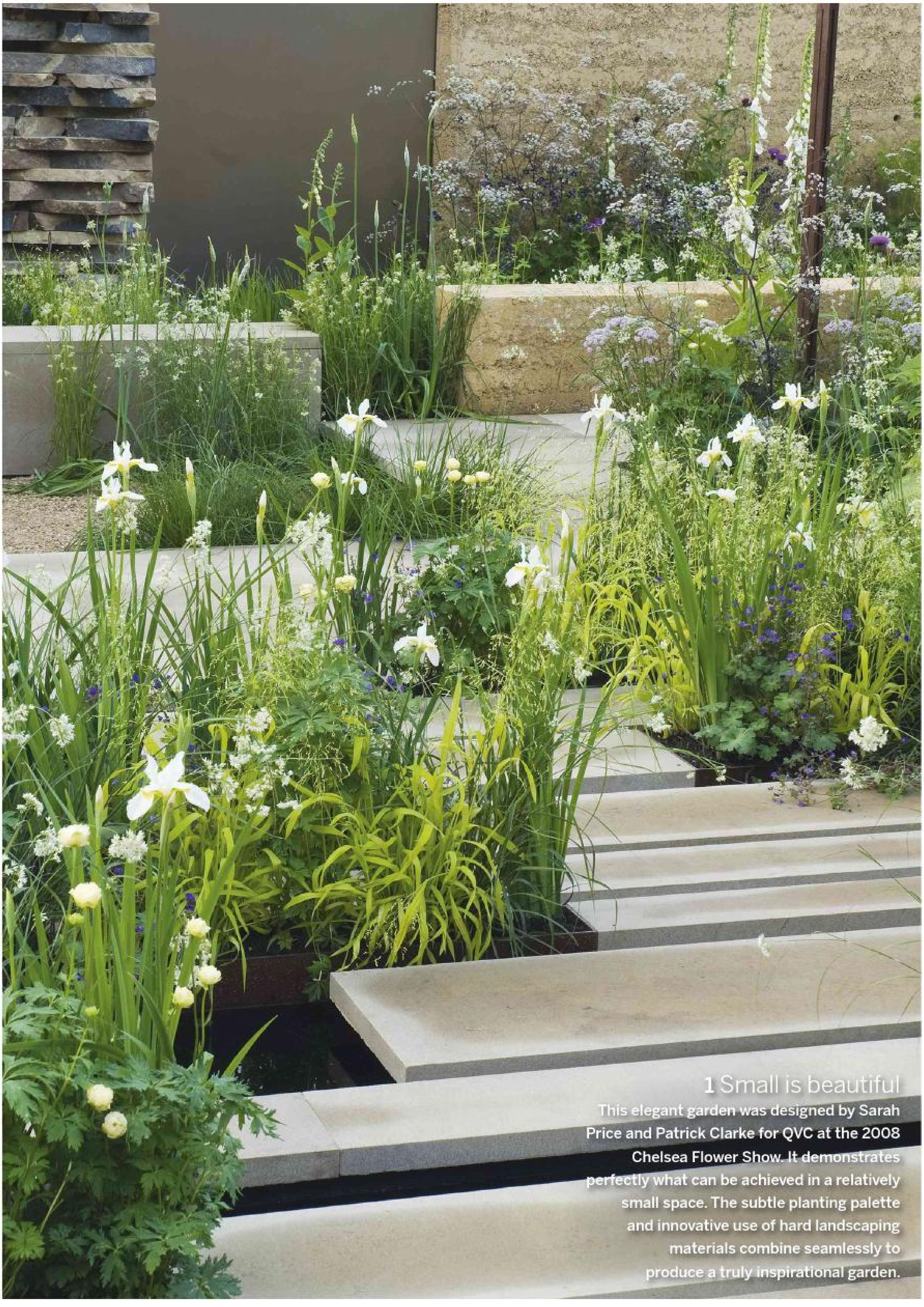
6 Try to create a journey in the garden.

7 Blur the boundaries with plants to hide the perimeter.

8 Use focal points to distract the attention away from the small size.

9 Make the most of vertical space with climbing plants such as *Clematis*.

10 Create a secret space within the garden – even if it is a tiny space.



1 Small is beautiful

This elegant garden was designed by Sarah Price and Patrick Clarke for QVC at the 2008 Chelsea Flower Show. It demonstrates perfectly what can be achieved in a relatively small space. The subtle planting palette and innovative use of hard landscaping materials combine seamlessly to produce a truly inspirational garden.

MMGI / BENNET SMITH. DESIGN: SARAH PRICE AND WYNNIATT-HUSEY CLARK / THE QVC GARDEN, CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW 2008

2 Soft and subtle

Selecting plants with pastel colours and foliage with fine textures does help to increase the sense of space in a garden. The softer, muted tones recede into the distance whereas hotter colours will tend to advance towards you, foreshortening the garden and making the space appear much smaller.

3 Old and new

For a sculpture garden in Sussex, I mixed existing Portland stone with reclaimed granite setts to make the patio appear much larger. I screened off part of the garden to add a sense of mystery and create a journey; a technique that works equally well for both large and small gardens.

4 Oasis in Kew

For this pocket-sized garden in Kew, I placed the decking at a 45º-angle to the house. Not only does this make the garden seem wider but it also creates larger beds for planting and helps to disguise the unexciting, square-shaped garden.

5 Angled paving

When space is tight between beds, the paving can be laid at an angle. Plants will merge into the path, softening the edges but allowing enough space to walk through and tend the beds. Using gravel, as an infill between the paving stones helps to prevent weeds and adds textural interest.

6 Narrow gauge

An interesting visual effect can be achieved by using smaller units of hard landscaping, such as this narrow decking. When laid the area will appear larger than if you were to use a wider timber. If using stone then either small granite or sandstone setts would produce a similar effect.

2

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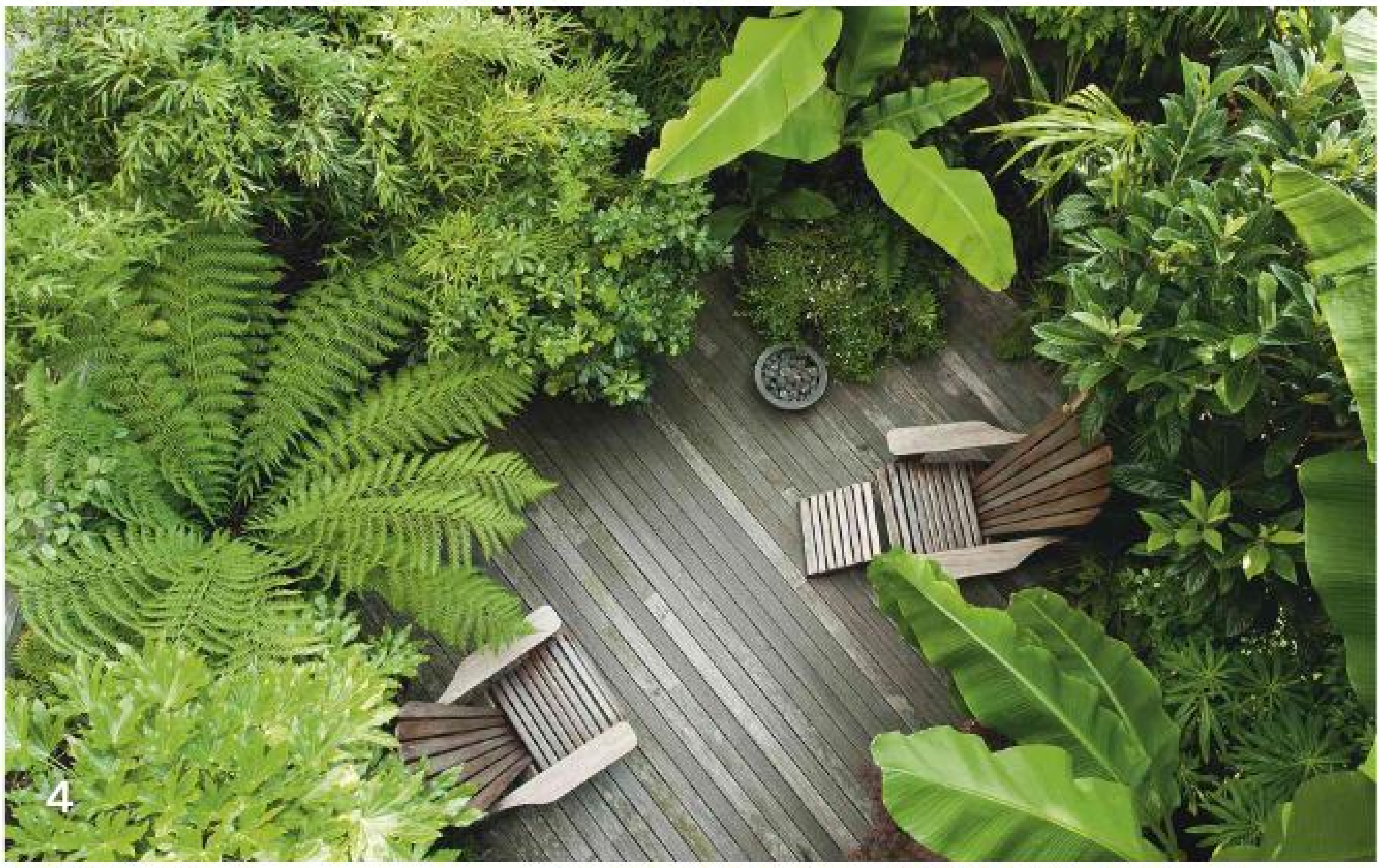
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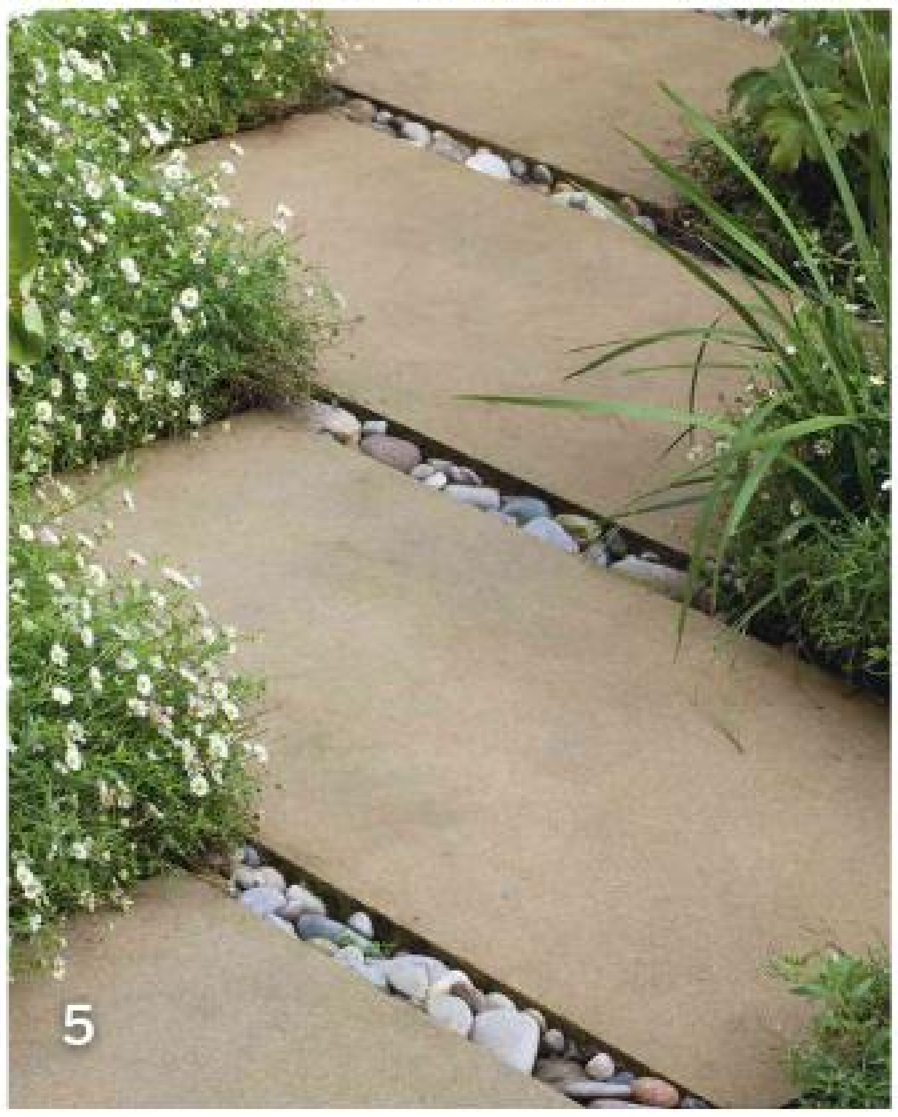
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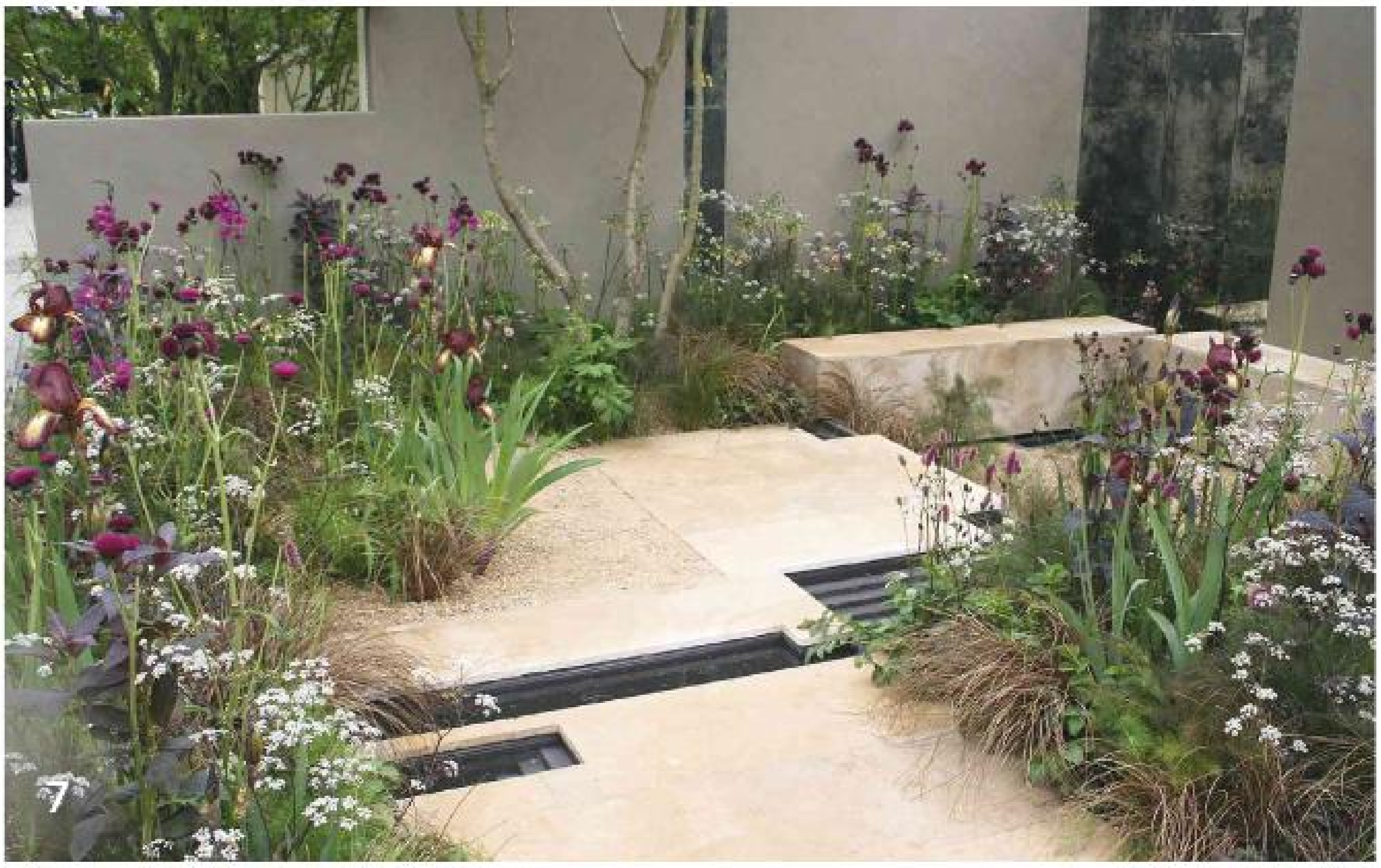
2, 3& 6 ANNE GUILFOYLE. 4 JACQUI HURST. 5 MARIANNE MAJERUS. DESIGN RANDLE SIDDELEY



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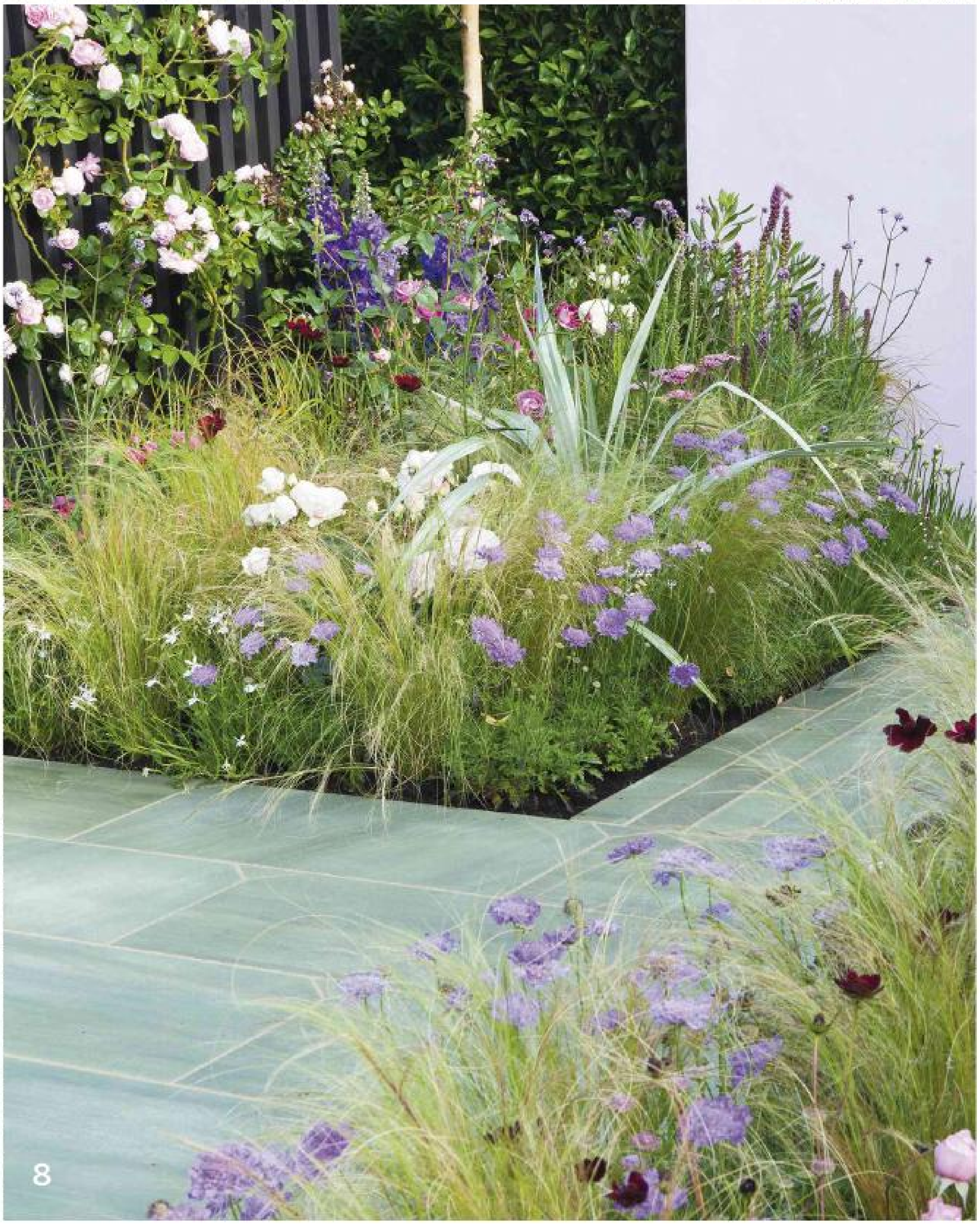

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7 ANNIE GUILFOYLE; 8 MARIANNE MAJERUS, DESIGN: THE STONE ROSES GARDEN, RHS HAMPTON COURT FLOWER SHOW 2011/ GREENES OF SUSSEX LTD

7 Mirror, mirror

This minute garden was Sarah Price's first Chelsea Flower Show garden in 2007. Her painterly approach to colour resulted in a design that felt spacious and serene, even though it was only a few metres wide. Antique-effect mirrors were used to bounce the light around and reflect the planting.

8 Purely pastel

Using pastel colours to make a small garden feel larger doesn't just have to apply to the planting. Now with a vast range of exterior paint colours available, walls and fences can be painted in softer colours to link not only with the planting scheme but also with the interior decor.

Further reading

Two excellent books for the spatially challenged gardener:

- *Plans for Small Gardens*
by Ann-Marie Powell
Pavilion, £16.99
ISBN 978-1862058767
A great book full of ideas. Not only does Ann-Marie provide plans and visuals but she also supplies really helpful lists of the materials you'll need. She also covers maintenance so you can design and build a garden that suits your lifestyle.

- *RHS Small Garden Handbook: Making the Most of Your Outdoor Space*
by Andrew Wilson
Mitchell Beazley 2013
ISBN 978-1845336813
Packed with inspirational ideas and practical information for gardeners with modest-sized spaces. With plenty of real-life case studies and lots of ideas on how to make instant improvements, the information is accessible and insightful.

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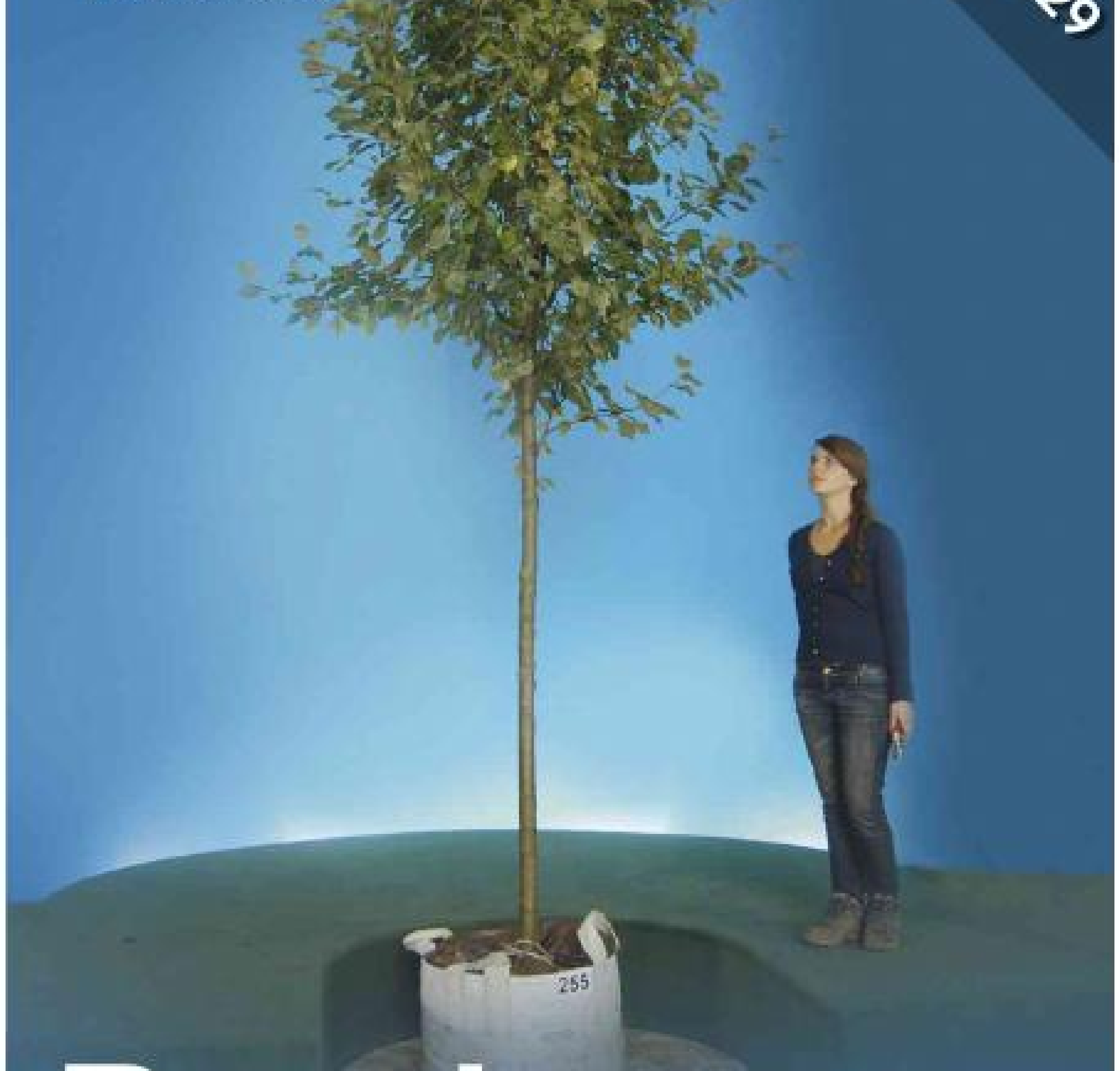

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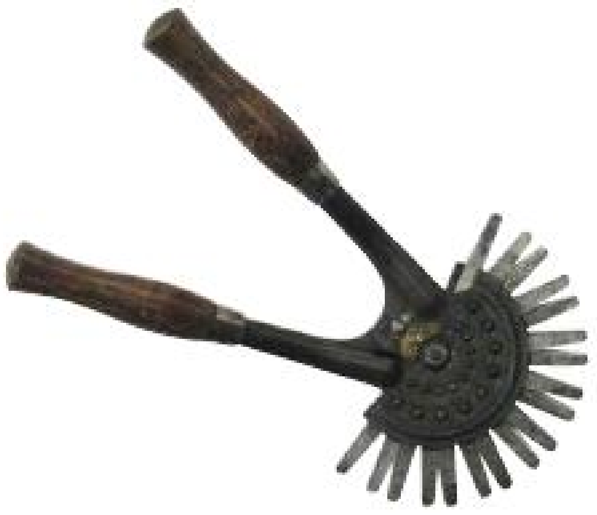

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Dated 1927, £260, Jon Fox Antiques, 01608 650325, jonfoxantiques.com

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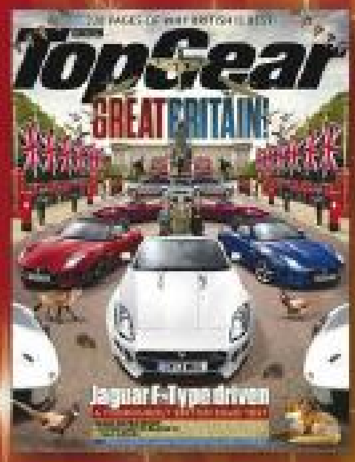
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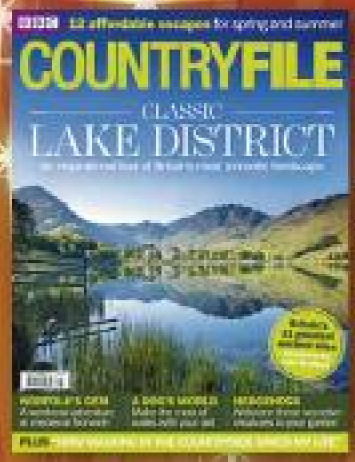
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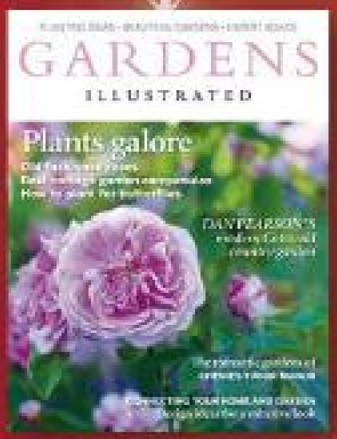
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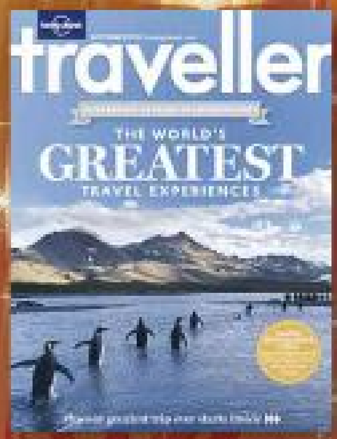
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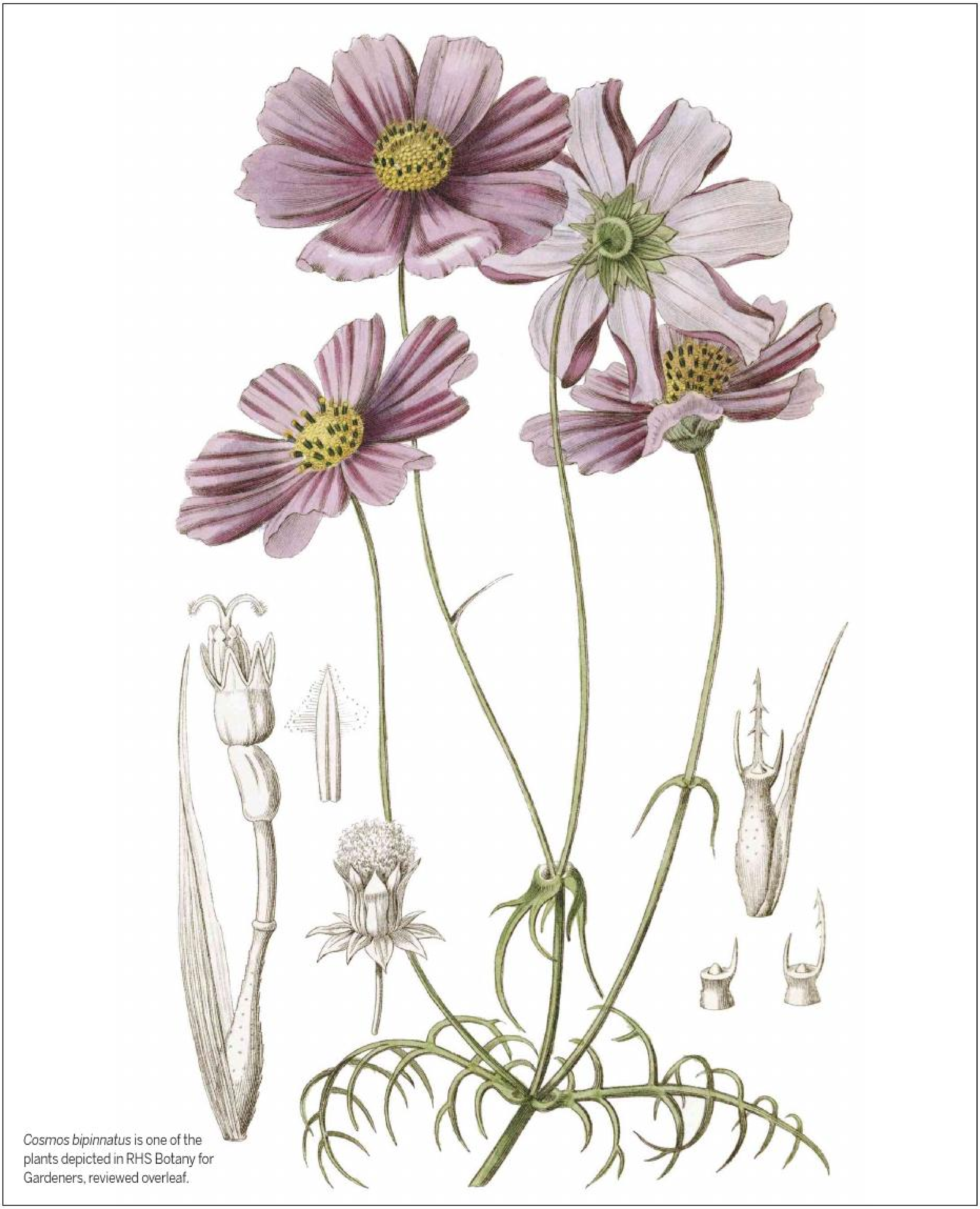
Downtools

Book reviews, reader offers, readers' letters, crossword



Cosmos bipinnatus is one of the plants depicted in RHS Botany for Gardeners, reviewed overleaf.

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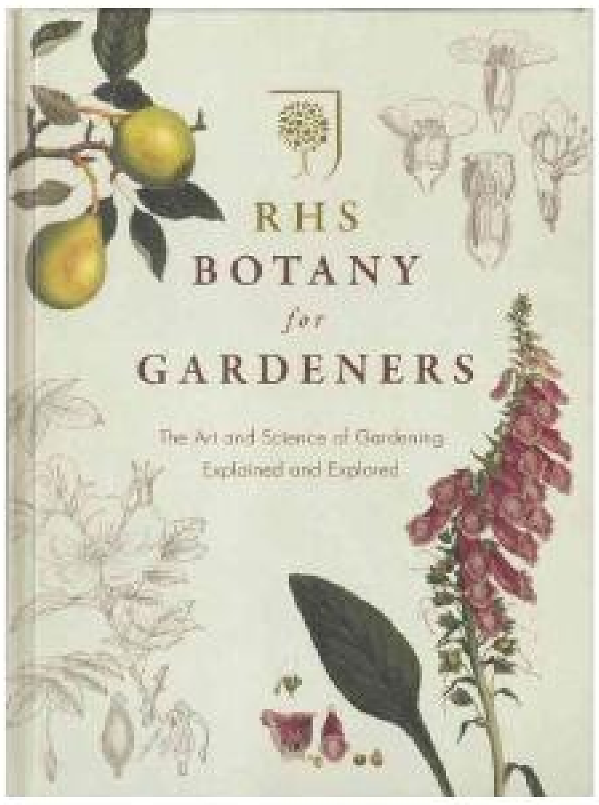
Book reviews

RHS BOTANY FOR GARDENERS

by Geoff Hodge

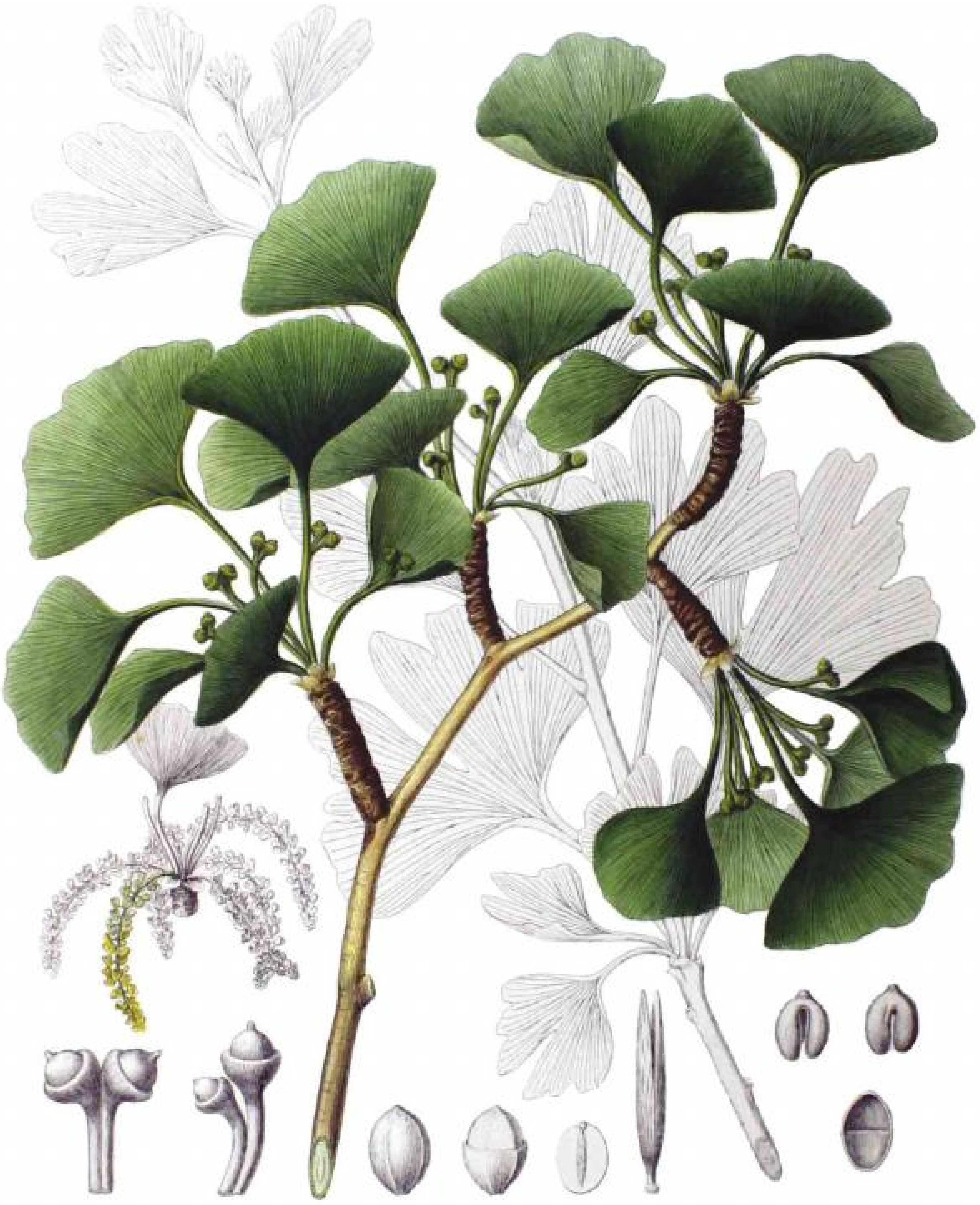
Mitchell Beazley, £14.99
ISBN 978-1845338336



The study of botany may greatly enrich one's understanding and practice of horticulture and vice versa; however the subject can often seem inaccessible to the hobbyist. It is clever of the Royal Horticultural Society, then, to produce this book, which is aimed at bridging the gap.

Although the book begins portentously ('The first simple studies of plants started with early man, the hunter-gatherers of the paleolithic era'), the book is quite easy to pick up and read at any point in the text. The illustrations are copious and highly decorative and the text is frequently enlivened by diagrams and 'feature boxes'.

As it skips along, *RHS Botany for Gardeners* stealthily dips its toe into the fields of plant systematics (the study of plant classification), physiology, anatomy, soil science and pathology. Huge subjects, but the author takes care not to overwhelm the reader and is at pains to illustrate the theory with examples common to the experience of all gardeners. However vaguely aware of it we are, these theoretical fields underpin gardeners' own endeavours in horticulture; therefore we come to the subject with a ready-made store of practical examples and observations. This makes learning a lot easier and the book takes full advantage of this.



The book is filled with accurate and charming images, including this *Ginkgo biloba* or Maidenhair tree

The chapter on systematics (The Plant Kingdom) is of particular interest and value. How often have we heard the gripes of gardeners, railing against name changes or perhaps the use of Latin names altogether? It should always be pointed out that the classification and nomenclature of living organisms is a vast and complex endeavour, the importance of which supersedes momentary inconveniences to gardeners and those in the horticultural trade.

This book will not make a botanist of you, nor will it turn you into a gardener, but it does very well in making the link between the two disciplines explicit. It would be beneficial to add a chapter on plant ecology – particularly in light of recent trends towards 'naturalistic' gardening. Nevertheless, *RHS Botany for Gardeners* is a valuable introduction to the study of plant science.

Rory Dusoir is a Kew-trained head gardener and designer.

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RRP £14.99. **Reader offer price £12.99**, including p&p.

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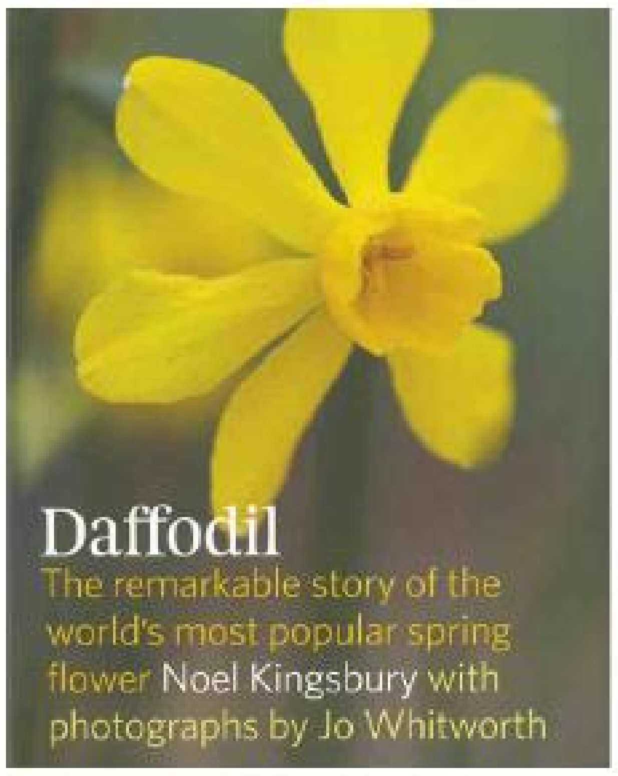
DAFFODIL

by Noël Kingsbury

Timber Press, £17.99. ISBN 978-1604693188


Daffodil
The remarkable story of the world's most popular spring flower Noel Kingsbury with photographs by Jo Whitworth

We are all familiar with the daffodil as spring's 'joy bringer' but few know its story. Noël Kingsbury rectifies this with a flourish. The text is enthralling, not a word is wasted and the pages are packed with fascinating stories and facts encompassing early history, domestication and breeding both past and present.

The book is an insight not only into the daffodil but also into the people who have fallen under its spell and imbue these flowers with such character. These include master breeder 'The Brodie of Brodie' (Ian Brodie, 24th Laird of Brodie Castle, Moray); Peter Barr who promoted naturalising; and Ellen Willmott who collected over 600 varieties and is reputed to have made staff install trip wires around her fields that triggered air guns, deterring those who thought they could help themselves.

Interviews and comments from present day enthusiasts in Britain and abroad emphasise the flower's global appeal, adding a welcoming personal touch. The insight into the world of growers is particularly interesting. As a gardener, Noël's book takes you everywhere you want to go.

The pages are beautifully laid out, each picture accorded its own 'gallery space'. Jo Whitworth's images complement the text perfectly, capturing the spirit of the daffodil from portraits with airy elegance to the characterful faces of expert judges at a show. The text is well organised and flows easily too, moving the reader seamlessly from story to story.

This is a fascinating, up-beat book with floral sunshine on every page; in the images, splashed down the spine of text pages – remove the elegant dust cover and underneath there is a beam of yellow too. The whole book has a welcome, vibrant energy and would appeal to anyone who knows and loves the daffodil and would like to get to know it better. Shame it ends by covering pests and diseases: it would have been nice to conclude with Noël's personal thoughts on the daffodil, now he knows them so intimately. Like Narcissus of mythology this is a book you will look at again and again.

Matthew Biggs makes regular appearances on BBC Radio 4's Gardeners' Question Time.

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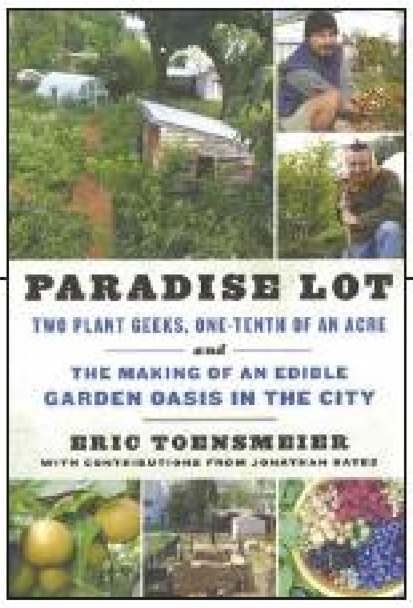
PARADISE LOT
TWO PLANT GEEKS, ONE-TENTH OF AN ACRE
and
THE MAKING OF AN EDIBLE GARDEN OASIS IN THE CITY
ERIC TOENSMEIER
WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM JONATHAN BATES

PARADISE LOT

by Eric Toensmeier

Chelsea Green Publishing
Company, £14.99
ISBN 978-1603583992

Faced with a barren lot in the USA containing toxic soil littered with asphalt and concrete and brick, even the most determined gardener might lose heart. But not plant geeks Eric and Jonathan. This is an inspiring tale of how they not only transformed their plot into a 'permaculture paradise', but enticed their two Eves in the process.

As one of America's leading permaculture teachers, Eric Toensmeier's passion for growing food more sustainably and in harmony with natural ecosystems is catching. We are introduced to techniques such as grouping plants in mutually beneficial partnerships to provide weed and pest control and the advantages of growing low-maintenance edible perennials.

However, this is more of a charming personal account than a handbook. We learn through the authors' own trials and tribulations, and the background love stories provide a big heart that pulsates through what could have seemed a lengthy and under-illustrated text.

This book's compassionate philosophy promises to reinvigorate the gardening outlook of beginners and old hands alike.

Catherine Smalley is a freelance writer.

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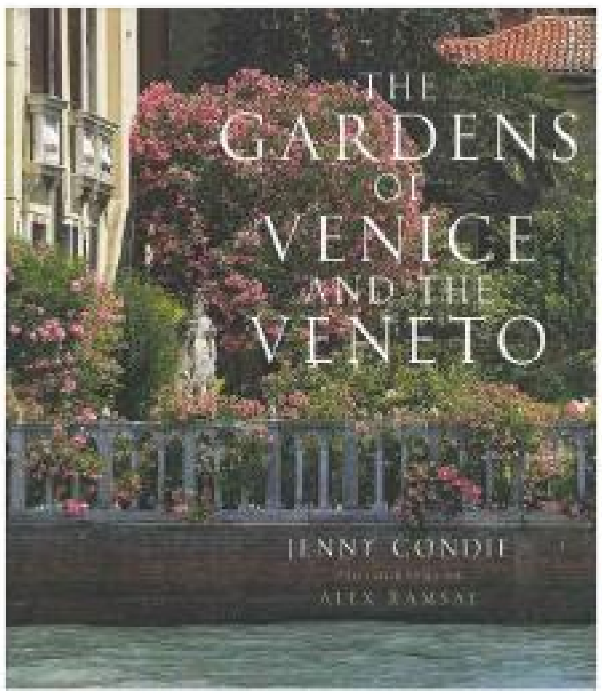
Books

THE GARDENS OF VENICE AND THE VENETO

by Jenny Condie, photographs by Alex Ramsay
Frances Lincoln, £35
ISBN 978-0711234048



This is the first book to be devoted to the gardens of Venice and the Veneto, written by an English writer and art historian resident in Venice. Jennie Condie's fluent and effortlessly scholarly style is vital to an understanding of a region of Italy riven by centuries of social, political and cultural cross-currents.

Condie's narrative is the perfect driver for Alex Ramsay's superbly numinous photographs, and her trail takes her through the vast and fecund river-seamed plain reclaimed from marshland, along lush river valleys, into hill towns and the serpentine lagoon of Venice itself. She does not pull her punches, lamenting (with other recent visitors) 'the often gratuitous disfigurement to which most of the Veneto has been subjected over the last 40 years'.

Books like this, which cherry-pick a relatively miniscule number of gardens, carry both an inbuilt strength and a potential weakness. Readers gain a potent insight into the greatest gardens, but may be left with no clue as to the horticultural reality of the region as a whole. This book, however, is rightly steeped in what Condie calls 'the eternal elements of Italian tradition' – water and sculpture (to which must be added architecture in all its forms, from lichened Graeco-Roman fragments to sleek Palladian villas). In fact, although the staple palette of Venetian plants and the transition from formal garden to Kentian-style landscape are identified, only a smattering of the images focus on plants and borders alone.

Turning the pages of this fine book, you feel as if you had stepped inside a painting by Mantegna, Carpaccio, Giorgione, Dossi or another great Renaissance artist, where the rocks, hills and towns of the Veneto are so often the backcloth. On my first visit to Venice, I stayed in an apartment directly opposite a convent where twice daily a crocodile of nuns would patrol their small canalside courtyard between huge urns filled with lemon trees. Water, architecture and accents of citrus and green make up my own special memory. This splendid book has reassured me that in the Veneto they are universal.

Katherine Lambert's latest book Gardens of Cornwall *is published by Frances Lincoln.*

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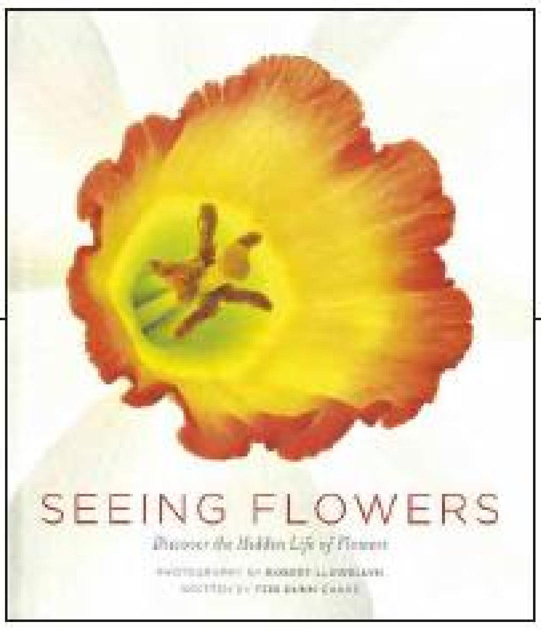

SEEING FLOWERS

photographs by Robert Llewellyn,
text by Teri Dunn Chace
Timber Press, £20
ISBN 978-1604694222

Gardeners who pause to marvel at the crinkled, crêpe paper folds of a poppy, the painterly strokes on a bearded iris or the delicate, unfurling trumpets of morning glory will find plenty of enjoyable detail to pore over in this glossy, large-format book.

Robert Llewellyn's exceptionally intricate flower portraits are produced from up to 45 different images, all shot at various points of focus and then stitched together, using a technique developed for work with microscopes. The effect is arresting, revealing not only the complexity of each plant's myriad parts but also, in many cases, their innate sculptural qualities.

Teri Dunn Chace's accompanying prose delves into the natural history behind the plants – their origins, composition and pollination; how they have been used and hybridised along the way; plus aspects of related folklore and their medicinal uses.

The writer's decision to divide the book into 28 plant families is a good one and the generous picture captions are pleasingly informative too, creating a book that is clear and easy to access.

Paula McWaters is a gardening writer and editor.

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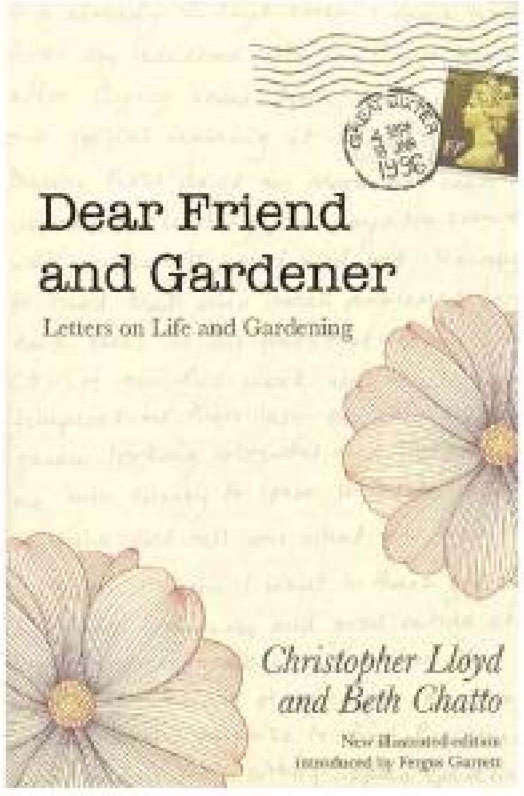
DEAR FRIEND AND GARDENER: LETTERS ON LIFE AND GARDENING

by Christopher Lloyd and Beth Chatto
(New illustrated edition introduced by Fergus Garrett)
Frances Lincoln, £20
ISBN 978-071124611


Dear Friend and Gardener
Letters on Life and Gardening
Christopher Lloyd and Beth Chatto
New illustrated edition introduced by Fergus Garrett

Do we know what makes a truly great gardener? The answer is writ large in this fascinating exchange of letters between two of the greatest; Christopher Lloyd and Beth Chatto. It is love. Love of plants, love of nature, a boundless, tireless but exacting love for the gardens that are the mainsprings of their being – but also love of life itself, an energetic and generous appreciation of music and conversation; good food, good friends, good company.

They compare notes on plants and plantsmen. They worry about the state of horticultural education – insufficiently 'hands on' – and what will become of large, complicated gardens like their own. Sometimes they disagree sharply, as in the pros and cons of organic growing. They grumble over the travails of old age – the irritating unreliability of knees and the miles wasted retrieving forgotten spectacles. They tease each other gently: Christo is 'a crusty old bachelor rattling round your medieval halls like a pill in a box', while Christo wonders over Beth's resolute technophobia. Above all, they write like angels: savouring snowdrops that cluster together 'like penguins', or white-flowered love-in-a-mist, recalling lace on a little girl's petticoat.

These letters were originally published in 1998. This is a new edition, with an introduction by Fergus Garrett, friend to both, and now including photographs of their gardens. These don't really add much: the Chatto garden images are helpful, providing an overview of the place, whereas the Dixter photographs are largely studies of combinations. Having said that, the random pairing of Miss Willmott's ghost with *Melianthus major* is sublime. However, the extra £5 for this new edition is amply justified by a more generous format with better, brighter paper; larger, more widely spaced, more readable type (none of us is getting any younger) and delightful end papers with a map of each garden.

This is not a book to read all at one sitting, but to keep by your bed and sip when the mood takes you – like a heady and delicious nightcap. If you don't have it already, treat yourself. And if you have any gardeners on your Christmas list, any indecisions about presents are now resolved at a stroke.

Ambra Edwards is a writer specialising in gardens.

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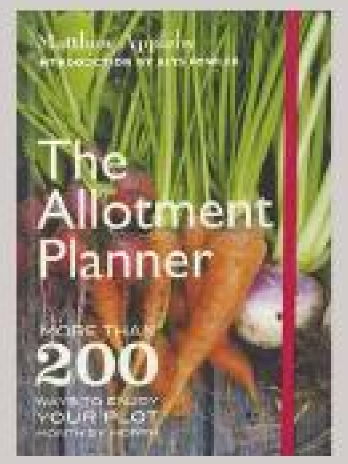
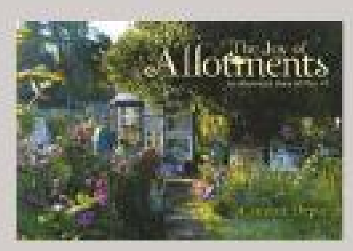
Other recently released books for gardeners



THE ALLOTMENT PLANNER
by Matthew Appleby
Frances Lincoln, £14.99
ISBN 978-0711234703
Ideas and projects to help the gardener enjoy and make the most of their allotment through the year.



THE JOY OF ALLOTMENTS
by Caroline Deput
Souvenir Press, £10
ISBN 978-0285642003
An illustrated diary of life on a plot in Richmond, London, over the course of a year.

GROW HARVEST COOK

GROW HARVEST COOK
by Meredith Kirton and Mandy Sinclair
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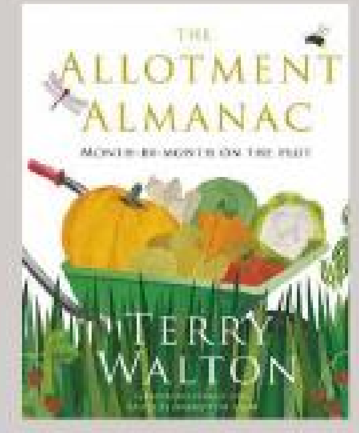

THE ALLOTMENT ALMANAC
by Terry Walton
Bantam Press, £15
ISBN 978-0593070697
Entertaining guide from a gardener with 50 years experience on his allotment, who is a regular guest on BBC Radio 2.

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Reader offers

Offer one

10 sets of Fiskars QuikFit™ tools to be won, worth £84.94 each

This month GARDENS ILLUSTRATED is offering you the chance to win one of ten sets of Fiskars QuikFit™ tools – ideal if you have limited storage space.

Developed by leading garden tools manufacturer Fiskars, QuikFit™ is a clever system that comes with a selection of interchangeable handles and heads for specific gardening tasks. With a universal adaptor, you simply click on a new head and get on with the task at hand.

All the tools are made of light-weight hardwearing metal composite, while the aluminium handles incorporate a comfortable soft-grip QuikFit™ grip for enhanced durability.

Each winning package is worth £84.94 and contains:

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B QuikFit Double Patio Scraper (£14.99)
C QuikFit Wire Fork (£14.99)
D QuikFit Trowel (£14.99)
E QuikFit Standard Fork (£14.99)
F QuikFit Angled 3 Prong Cultivator (£14.99)
(Selection shown below right)

HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win, please answer the following question:

What is the name for the build up of dead grass and moss that accumlates within a lawn?

Enter by post send a postcard with your answer, along with your name, address, postcode and contact details to:
GARDENS ILLUSTRATED 203/Fiskars,
PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA.
Enter online at gardensillustrated.com
Competition closes 30 November 2013

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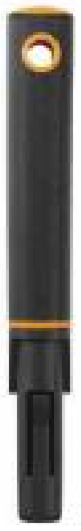


A

B

C

D

E

F

Terms and Conditions: 1 The promoter is Immediate Media Company Bristol Ltd. **2** Entrants must be aged 18 years or older, excluding the promoter's employees. **3** The closing date for all entries is 23.59 GMT on 30 November 2013. **4** By entering you agree to be bound by all the rules of the promotion. **5**. The Promoter will use entrants' personal details in accordance with the Immediate Privacy Policy (www.immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy). **6** Only one entry per person allowed. **7** Winning entries will be chosen at random from all eligible entries. **8** There are ten prizes of a set five QuikFit tool heads and a small handle worth £84.94 per set. **9** The draw is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Winners will be notified by email or post within 14 days of the closing date. **10** There is no cash alternative and prizes are not transferable. Each prize must be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. The Promoter reserves the right to substitute a prize with one of the same or greater value. **11** For details of winners send an SAE to Immediate Media Company Bristol, Tower House, Fairfax St, Bristol BS1 3BN within two months of the closing date. **12** No responsibility accepted for lost, delayed or fraudulent entries. **13** This promotion is subject to the laws of England. By entering, you undertake that you are not contravening any laws local to you. **14** Immediate Media Company Limited (publishers of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED) would love to keep you informed by post or telephone of special offers and promotions from the Immediate Media Company Group. Please write 'Do not contact Immediate Media Co Ltd' if you would prefer not to receive these. GARDENS ILLUSTRATED would like to keep you informed of newsletters, special offers and other promotions. Please write your email address and mobile number on your entry if you would like to receive these. You may unsubscribe from these at any time.

Offer two

Collection of 3 maiden fruit trees from Branch Nurseries

Branch Nurseries is offering readers a bespoke collection of three fruit trees – an eating apple, a cooking apple, and an eating pear. Each tree will be a maiden tree (one year old) making it perfect for training into the shape you choose (see our feature on page 56 for techniques).

Since climatic variation throughout the country means that certain cultivars work best given certain conditions, Branch Nurseries will tailor each order specifically to your region in the UK, offering those cultivars best suited to your garden.

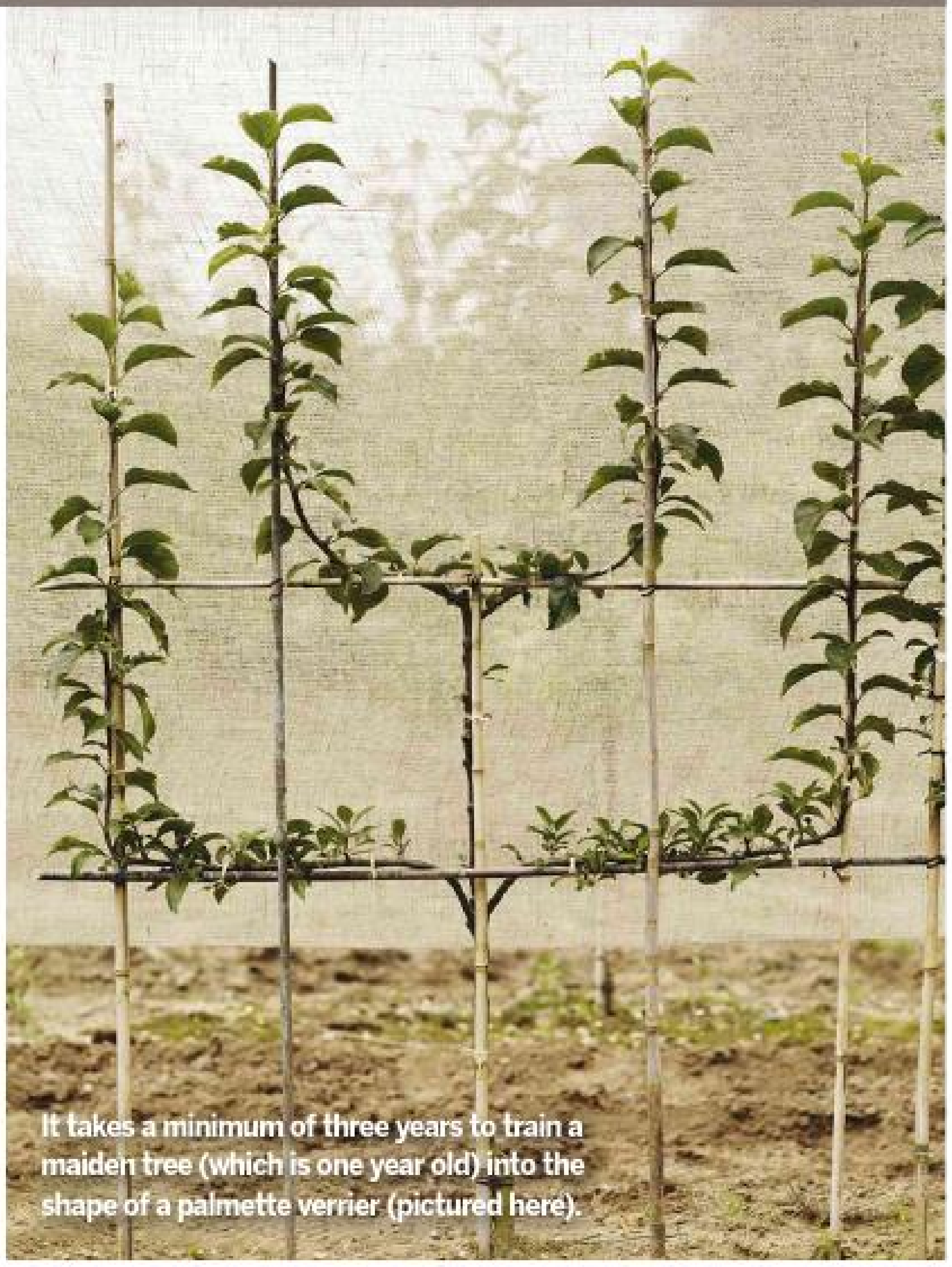
READER OFFER: Collection of three maiden fruit trees, tailored specifically to suit your garden, containing:

- 1 eating apple
- 1 cooking apple
- 1 eating pear

Total cost £25 (plus £9.99 p&p*)

How to order Email info@branchnurseries.co.uk giving details of location within the UK and your garden's aspect. Branch Nurseries will then discuss with you the best cultivars for your location. Please quote 'GARDENS ILLUSTRATED' in your email.

Offer closes 31 March 2014.
Open to UK readers only. *£9.99 p&p applies to UK mainland. Contact Branch Nurseries for details of exclusions.



It takes a minimum of three years to train a maiden tree (which is one year old) into the shape of a palmette verrier (pictured here).

Offer three

3 for 2 and FREE p&p on Carbon Gold's biochar Soil Improver

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ANDREW MONTGOMERY, JASON INGRAM

Get your trees, shrubs and fruit trees off to a good start this autumn by adding biochar to the planting hole. Tests with Bartlett Tree Experts have shown trees to establish successfully and maintain good health, with improved root growth and more efficient take up of soil nutrients (see page 13 for more details).

To help GARDENS ILLUSTRATED gardeners make the most of the autumn planting season, Carbon Gold is offering readers a great deal on their Soil Improver. This is biochar enriched with mycorrhizal fungi, seaweed and worm casts – ideal for trees, shrubs and roses.

OFFER Get three 4.5kg tubs of Soil Improver plus FREE next-day delivery for just £39.98 (save £24.49).* Go to carbongold.com and order the three-for-two on 4.5kg Soil Improver. Quote 'Gi10' when prompted for free p&p.

For details of the full range of Carbon Gold's biochar products go to carbongold.com

Offer closes 30 November 2013.
*Open to UK customers only.

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Letters

Have your say – we'd like to hear your views, so please write to us at: GARDENS ILLUSTRATED, 9th Floor, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN, or email letters@gardensillustrated.com

Star letter

Guilty pleasures

Although I have only a small garden, consisting mainly of lawn, borders and patio, I try to make it as colourful as possible. I start early in the year planting up tubs, pots and baskets, along with weeding and feeding, scrubbing the patio and spraying everything for greenfly etc. I find it all very time consuming for a full-time working, single mum of three.

Yet, all the hard work pays off and by mid summer my little corner of the world looks stunning, full of vibrant colours, and the air heavy with different scents. But I can count on one hand how often this year I had time to actually sit out and enjoy the fruits of my labour. Next year I'm going to reduce the number of containers and invest in colourful plants and shrubs that will come up year after year. After all, what's the point of spending all that time and effort if I can't enjoy the end results. I'm sure that there must be many readers out there who are guilty of the same thing, so let's all tell ourselves that next year we are going to really enjoy our gardens, not just work in them.

Carol Cason, Devon

NEW BOOK

Spread the word

I am writing a new book, but I need some help getting it on to the printed page, so I've decided to go the community publishing route using the crowdfunding set up Unbound. I like this new form of publishing and I like that the reader is king.

The book is about pollinators, it's about bees and flowers, but also about flies and a little bit about frogs. It's about gardening intelligently so that we all have a home. And there's a beekeeper involved (thelondonhoneycompany.co.uk).

I'm going to sow a meadow in a city, the sort that everyone can eat from. There will be beautiful pictures and honey kisses. My heart leaps a little when I think of these things. I've made a film (unbound.co.uk/books/letters-to-a-beekeeper) to give you a flavour of how the book might feel. If you like the film please pass it along to others, your support this way means a lot. If you love the idea please buy the book, you can pay in any currency; you can pay a lot or a little, as you see fit.

Alys Fowler, by email

INSPIRATION

Two birds, one stone

I had a disused gate getting in my way and needed to secure the pole to which I'd attached the wires for my raspberry canes. Thanks to your cottage garden feature [issue 198, p65] I found a solution to both problems. After digging a shallow trench to rest the gate in, I screwed the hinge on the gate into the pole. I then secured the gate in the trench with two bricks and filled it with tomatoes, sweet peas, nasturtiums, aquilegia… all the bits and pieces I could find. Very soon it looked as if it had been like that for years. It draws the eye to a small pond beyond, creating the impression of vast space in a fairly small garden. I'm delighted.

Edna Hobbs, Dorset

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TALKING POINT

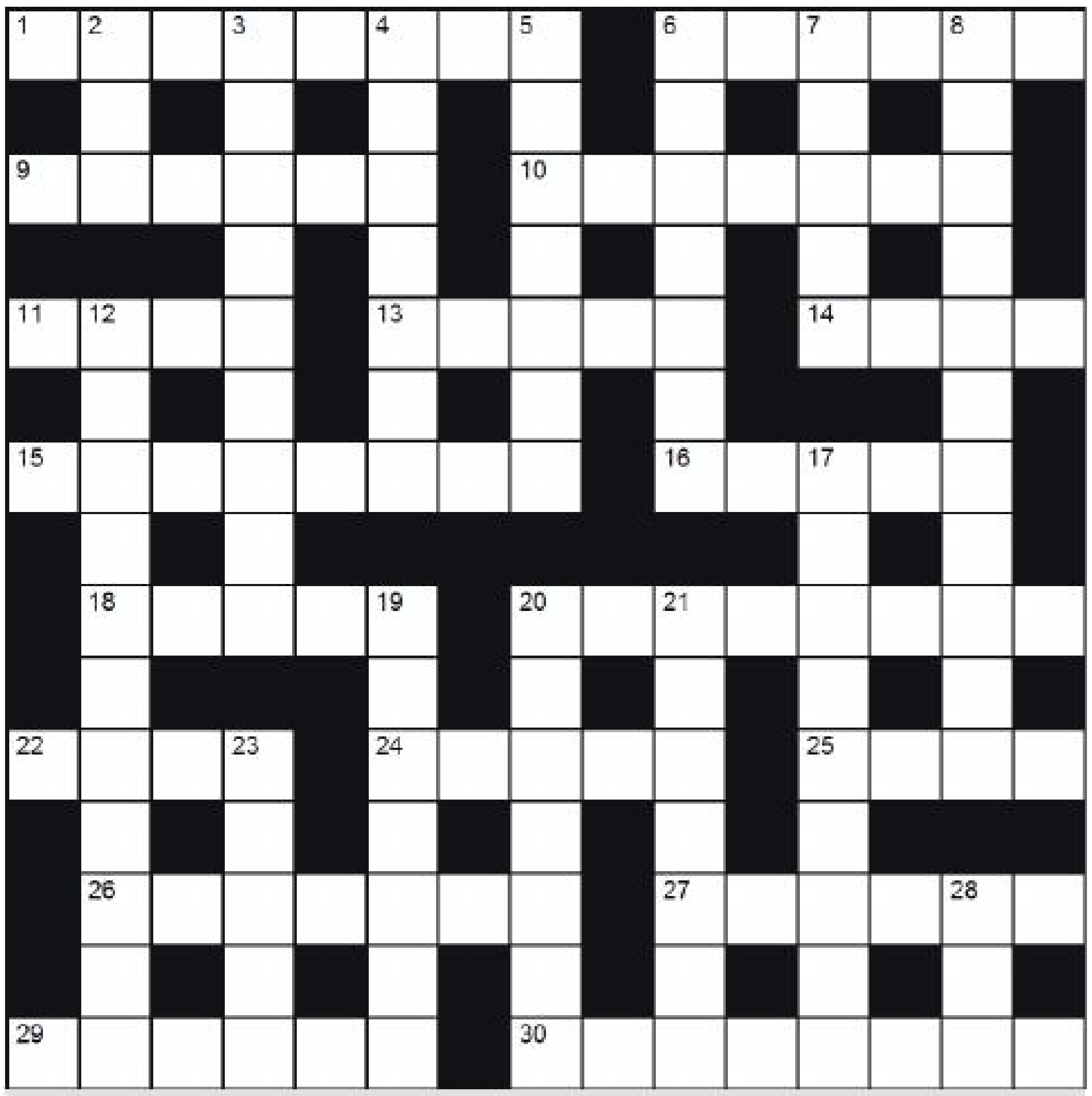
Francine Raymond argues we should all take advantage of this autumn's bumper crop

Francine Raymond is a *Daily Telegraph* gardening columnist, and keen forager. She is the author of *Keeping a Few Hens in Your Garden.*

Some years, I worry I might be taking more than my fair share when I'm out foraging. But not this year. We've had what's known as a 'mast year' – a year when nature goes into overdrive and we get a bonanza harvest. Everyone benefits – from fungi and insects, to birds and their predators – and it's a delight for all nature lovers. But what's so special about this year, you ask? Well, even the experts don't understand why this happens. Worldwide weather and climate affect woodland trees' fruit and seed production in cycles – beech trees apparently have a mast year every five to ten years. But let's not waste time wondering about the reasons for nature's generosity. Now's the time to get out to watch the wildlife and enjoy the feast; to walk and wander and take advantage of this bumper crop. Fill your pockets with nuts and seeds, hips and berries, fruit and fungi, to fatten up and stock the larder and decorate the house with wild abandon – and pass on your joy to others, before the vagaries of winter's paucity set in.

- What's your view? Write to us by post or email (details above). We reserve the right to edit letters.

Crossword



ACROSS

1 Hothouse pest – may bulge horribly! (5,3)

6 *Kalmia* is called the __ bush (6)

9 First name of Great Dixter's head gardener and our Nurseryman (6)

10 Butterfly with spotted wings – and a long curl of hair! (7)

11 *Tradescantia* with spiky foliage: 'The Thames at Oxford' (4)

13 A wild chrysanthemum – in phlox, eyebright (2,3)

14 Cedar fruit once distorted (4)

15 Not the morning charges, by the sound of it, for these fertilisers (8)

16 Type of spruce – possibly ask to hug it! (5)

18 Shaped like eg an hydrangea mophead (5)

20 An aptly named sempervivum – tiny if in rocks (8)

22 Eg maple fruits – put in locks? (4)

24 Frank, Dutch-born plant-hunter – merely moved, left out (5)

25 Bulbous underground stem of eg freesia (4)

26 Lancaster's favourite summer flower? (3,4)

27 Reap a harvest – good mixed earth (6)

29 A British potato – partly mash, er, me some! (6)

30 Organic fertiliser – if ash / elm mixed (8)

DOWN

2 Regard a potato's seed-bud (3)

3 Privet genus girl must set out around centre of tub (9)

4 *Polygonum* with pink flower spikes – bits rot off! (7)

5 Plots – as illustrated by our magazine! (7)

6 Fungal diseases of woody plants – Karen treated in extremes of coppices (7)

7 Its generic name is *Syringa* (5)

8 Shrub that fruits after colourful autumn foliage oddly rotates, once! (11)

12 Plant of *Euonymus* genus – makes tendril seep (7,4)

17 Herb genus, commonly called tansy, can mutate badly (9)

19 Plums – and moss, scattered (7)

20 I've a fly-damaged bit of *Hedera* (3,4)

21 Searches eg for mushrooms – over a very long time? (7)

23 Stonecrop genus (5)

28 Period of time – at the heart of *Cineraria* (3)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

OCTOBER'S SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 1 Asphodel **6** Flags **9** Genera **10** Bergenia **11** Russell **12** Thorny **13** Pignut **15** Aniseed **17** Tellima **20** Glossy **22** Stocks **24** Oak fern **26** Bonfires **28** Earthy **29** Strut **30** Annuals.

DOWN: 2 Spearmint **3** Heels in **4** Diane **5** Lobelia **6** Fir **7** Anemone **8** Scion **12** Tying **14** Twigs **16** Disanthus **18** Lucifer **19** Alonsoa **21** Olearia **23** Tools **25** Klein **27** Rot.

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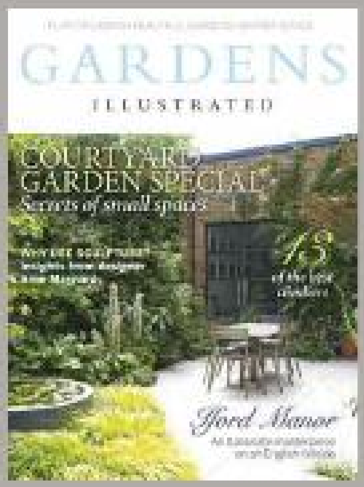

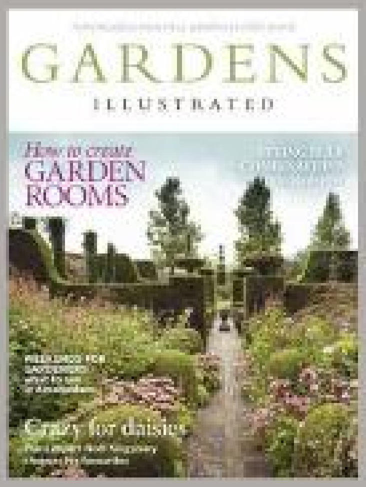

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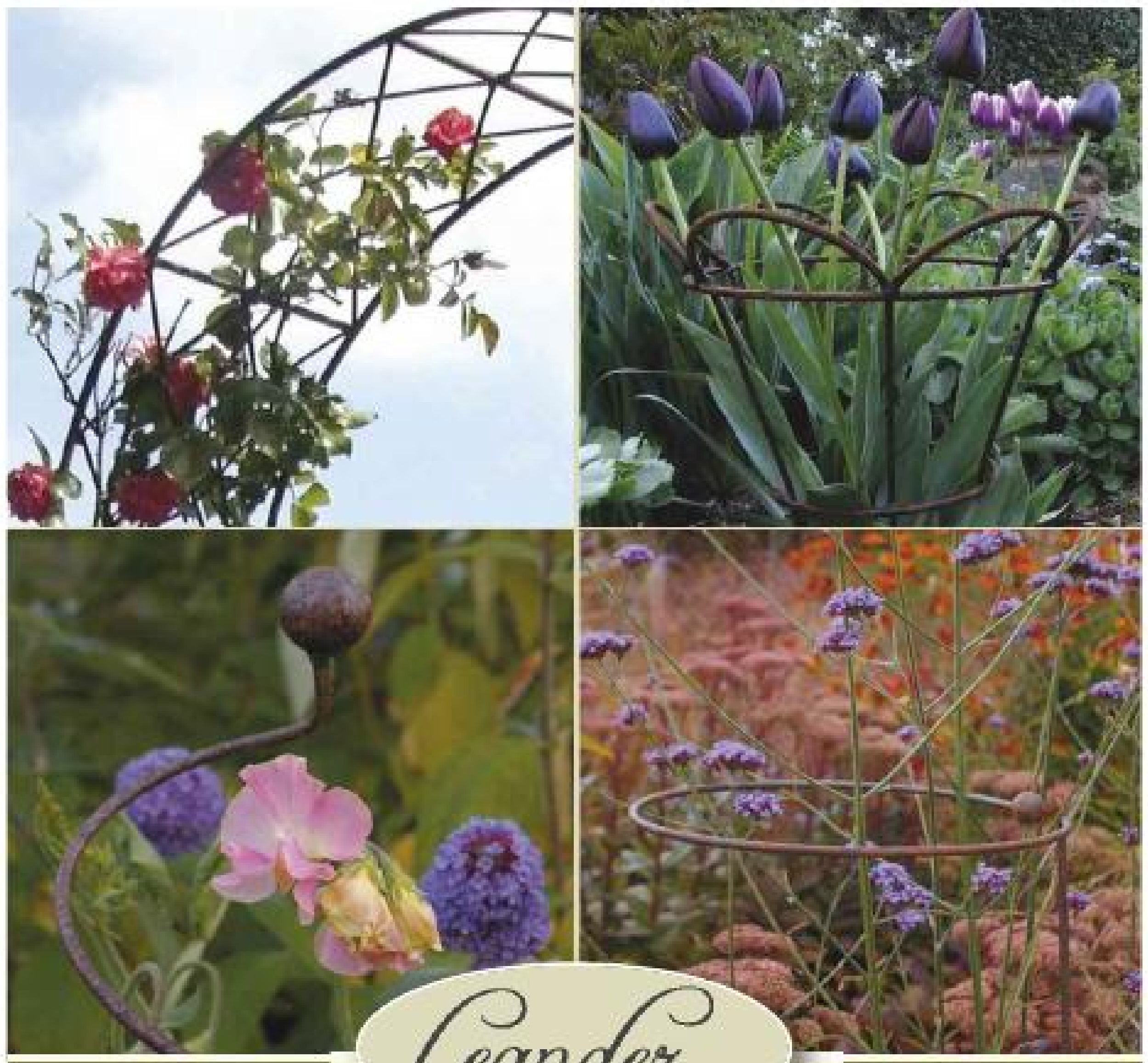

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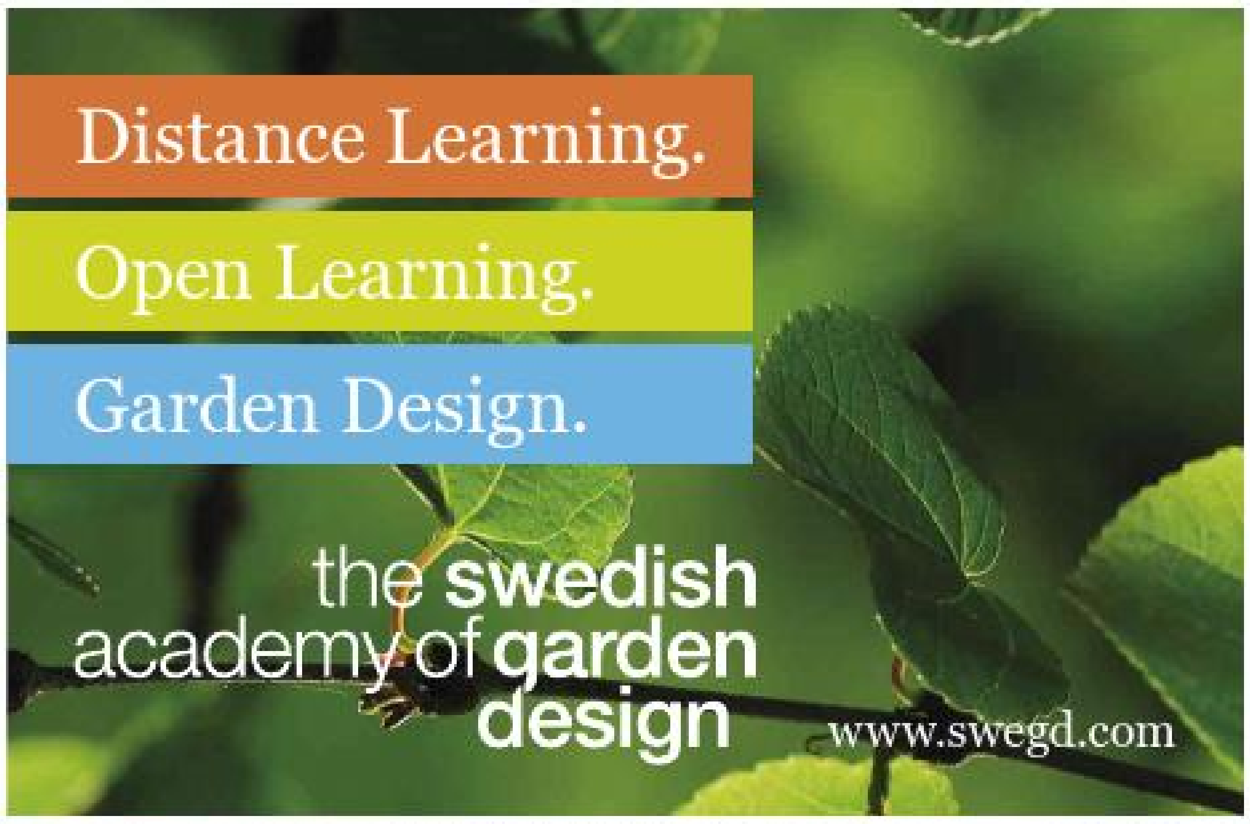

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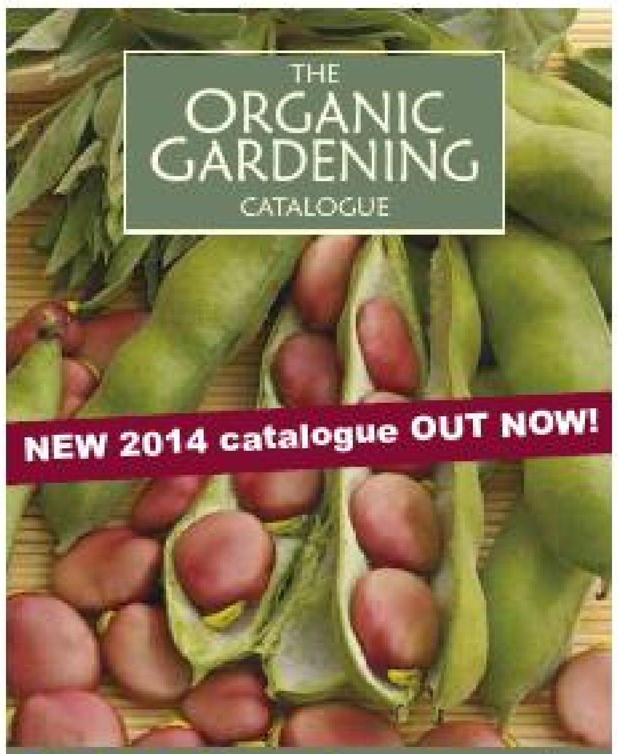

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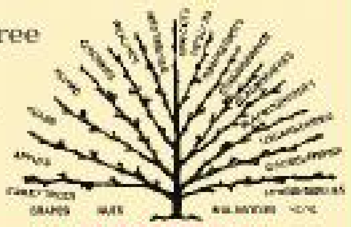

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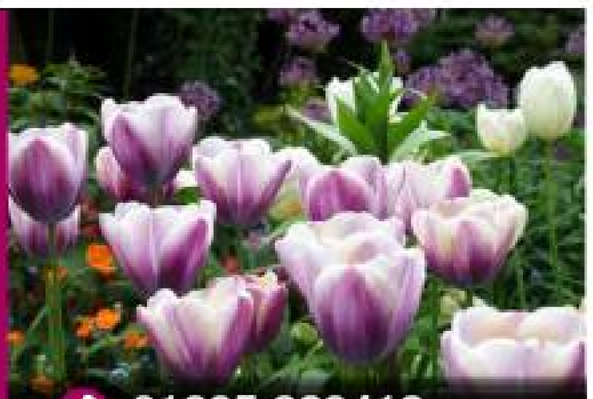

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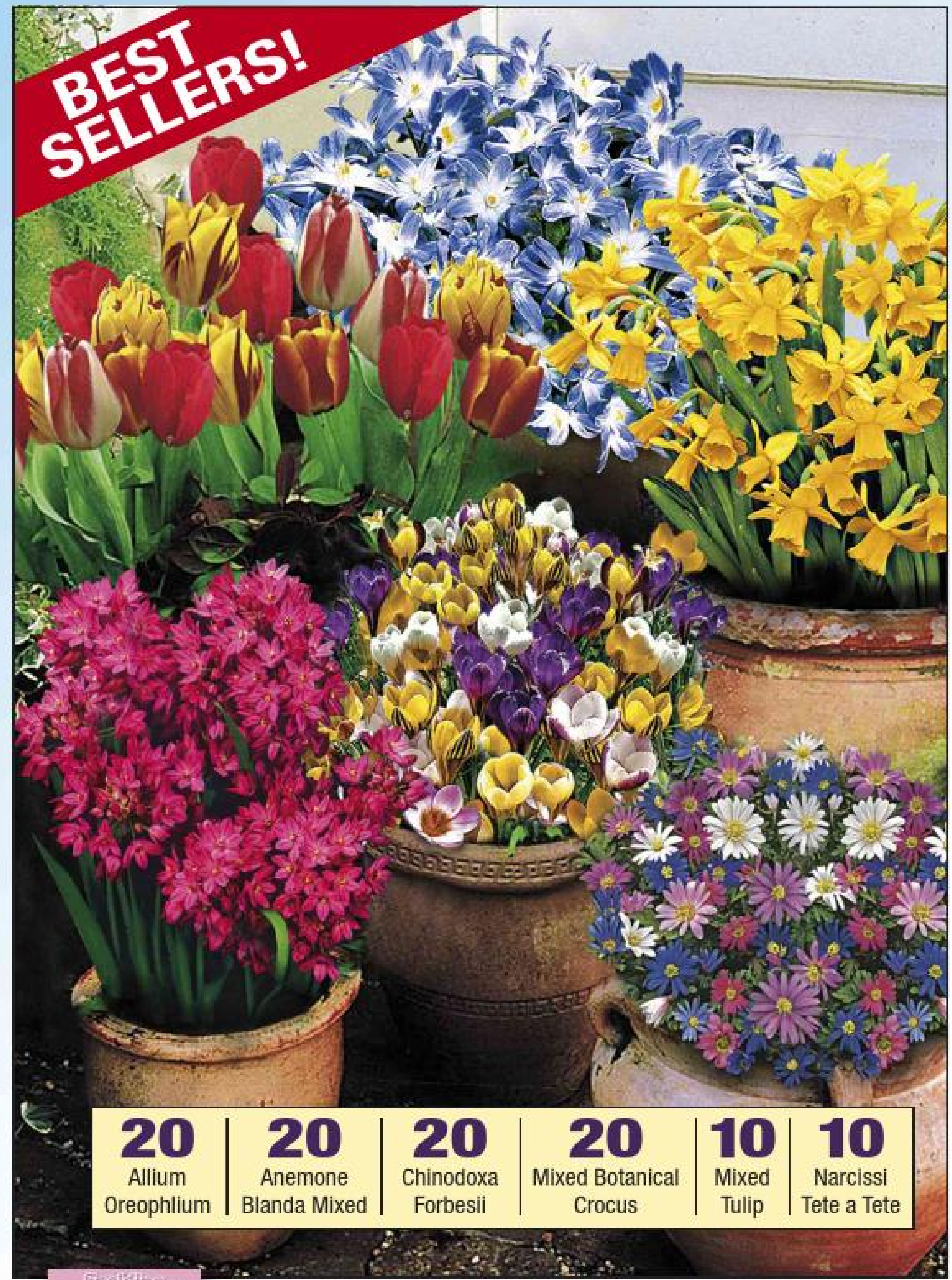

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WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **ANGELA HARDING**

Angela Harding

Some time ago a friend was given charge of a garden that had been done over by designers. By done over, I mean that it was the sort of scheme in which the planting of fully grown trees was considered a necessity, even though the garden already had quite a few nice specimens that had happily weathered a century or two without ever having blocked the motorway on the back of a low loader. Saplings, however, will do nothing by way of impressing a client or aggrandising the fee.

The immigrants settled in well but, by the time my friend took over, several of the original trees were showing signs of distress. The tops were dying out. It was due to compaction caused by the fantastically large machinery used to plant the new trees. More machinery had to be brought in to pump air into the soil and, eventually, it all came right.

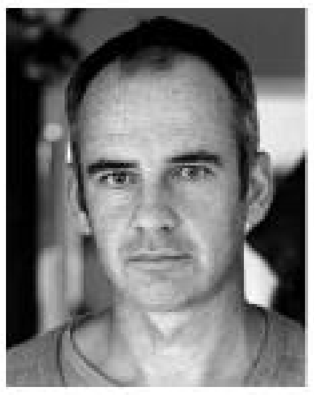
I suppose certain plants must have evolved to enjoy the patch where the mastodon took his dust bath

Here this year, after the walls of the fruit garden went up and before the floor in the middle was paved, we opted to have a break from builders. Not that the builders weren't absolutely charming, but they had been here for a year, on and off, as one project suggested another. The unpaved centre of the fruit garden didn't seem such a big deal. It was so compacted and trampled by the building work that surely nothing could grow there and we could put up with it for a while.

To begin with it remained hard and bare, but that was the cold part of this summer when nothing grew anyway, and I was trampling it every day to water the newly planted fruit. Then I went away for a fortnight, during which the hot summer began, and returned to find it transformed. There was no bare ground to be seen, and the greenery was waist high. There were the fast-growing weeds, of course: groundsel and nipplewort and sow-thistles and fat rosettes of marsh thistle and deceivingly languorous tendrils of bindweed.

Outnumbering all of that were opium poppies; sprung from nothing to glaucous sleekness in less than two weeks, and some bursting with bud already. More puzzling, there was a lot of a bluish kind of kale I had grown a few years before. I remember some of it running to seed, but no seedlings had appeared in the bed, and I'd never seen kale grow so well or as fast as this. There was *Verbena bonariensis*, which I thought was gone forever after the previous winters, but here was growing thick and quick, and presumably from a couple of stray seeds: all on baked, compacted, rock-hard clay.

So some things must like the trampled earth. I suppose that, since where there is a gap you will get a filler, certain plants must have evolved to enjoy the patch where the mastodon took his dust bath. There was a time when animals even bigger than that would have roamed and, while they would have left some damage underfoot, there must have been a cycle of some sort, where compacted sauropod footprint was returned to crumbling soil. We are talking about creatures that weighed ten times more than the largest elephant. Is that more than the weight of a tree with balled roots dangling from a crane? Possibly not.



Frank Ronan is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire

There are no plans to import great trees here. I could think of more wonderful things to do with that kind of money. But it has set me wondering. A great problem for those of us who garden on clay is working in the borders during the winter. You have to work off boards to avoid compaction, and boards get slippy in the wet and you teeter and it is not entirely satisfactory. If we could find enough other plants that enjoy packed clay as much as kale and verbena and opium poppies do, and have patches of them worked into the scheme at regular intervals as places from which to stand and tend the rest: would that work? □

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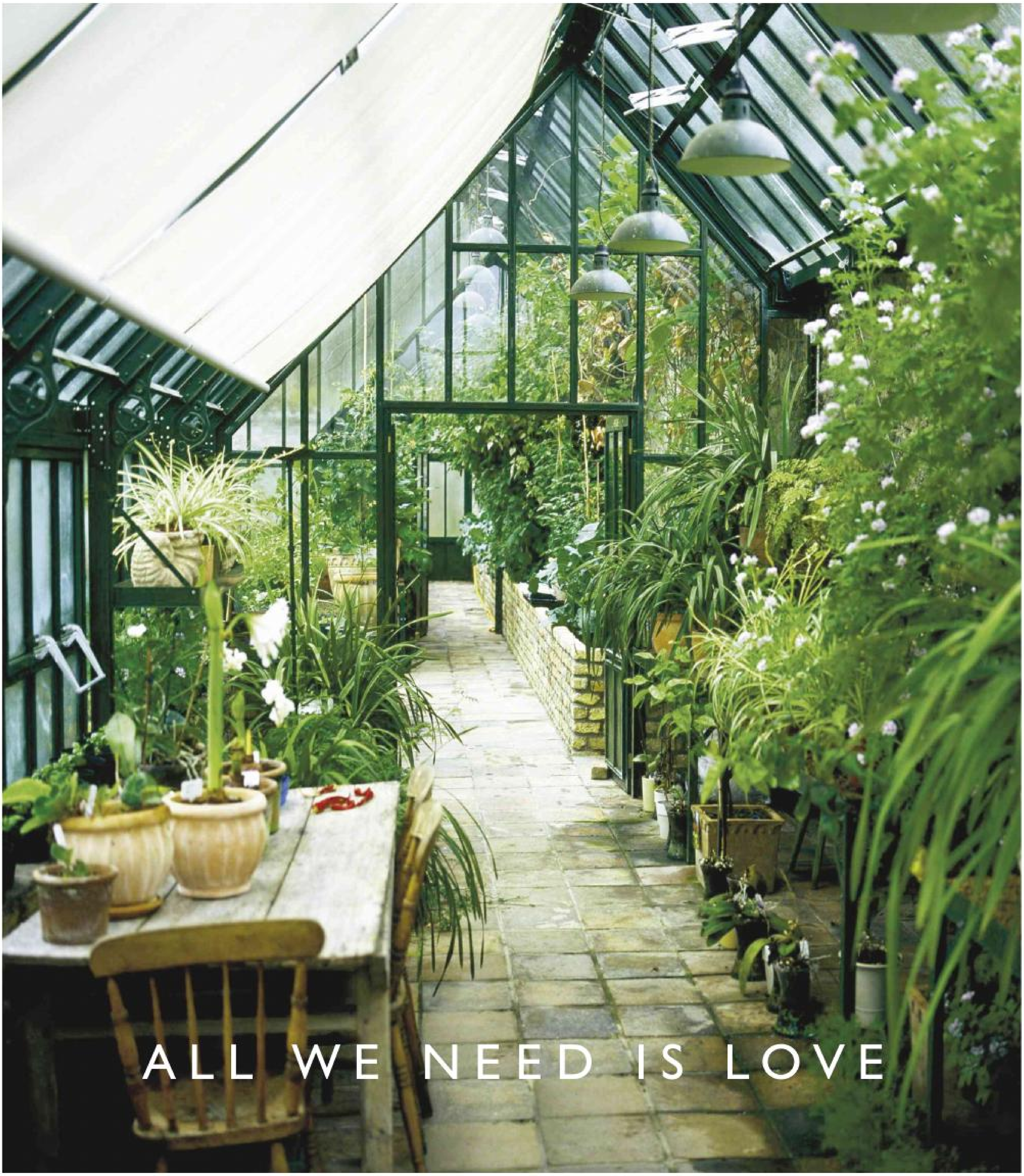

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